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FBIS-EEU-93-058 CONTENTS *29 March 1993*

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INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Karadzic Reviews Peace Plan Signing, Travel Agenda *[Belgrade Radio]* 1
Italy Requests Slovenia, Croatia Revise Osimo Accords *[TANJUG]* 1
Croat Daily on Russian Role in Balkans *[DANAS 26 Feb]* 1
Serb Weekly on Turkey's 'Imperialistic' Ambitions *[NIN 26 Feb]* 2

INTER-EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

Visegrad Defense Ministers Discuss NATO Ties *[CTK]* 5
Slovakia Proposes Hungarian Border Agreement *[CTK]* 5
Slovakia Will Not Alter Gas Pipeline Agreement *[CTK]* 5

ALBANIA

Berisha Relegates Army to Nonpolitical Life *[Tirana Radio]* 6
    Meets With Minority Representatives *[Tirana Radio]* 6
Defense Minister Zhulali Leaves for Brussels *[ATA]* 7
Editor Charged With Spreading False Information *[Tirana Radio]* 7
Students Protest Professor's Dismissal *[KOHA JONE 17 Mar]* 7
Commentary Outlines Foreign Policy Objectives *[Tirana Radio]* 7

BULGARIA

Zhelev Departs on Visit to Romania *[Sofia Radio]* 9
    Returns From Bucharest *[Sofia Radio]* 9
NATO Air Commander Ashe Arrives *[BTA]* 9
Videnov Cautious on New Elections Issue *[BTA]* 9
Videnov Addresses National BSP Conference *[Sofia Radio]* 10
    Conference Ends, Supports Cabinet *[BTA]* 11
DUMA Criticizes Zhelev Support for Yeltsin *[23 Mar]* 11
Defense Minister Aleksandrov Departs for Brussels *[Sofia Radio]* 12
Defense Minister on Regional Situation *[Athens I KATHIMERINI 28 Mar]* 12
Ludzhev Denounces SDS Conference Decisions *[TRUD 18 Mar]* 13
Macedonian Opposition Deputy Views Relations *[BTA]* 14
Ministers Comment on FRY Embargo, Other Issues *[BTA]* 14
IMF Mission Supports Stabilization Program *[BTA]* 15
World Bank To Make Water Project Loan *[BTA]* 16
Finance Minister Discusses Corruption *[BTA]* 16
Germany Extends Credit for Agricultural Equipment *[BTA]* 17
Nuclear Safety Agreement Signed With Germany *[BTA]* 17
Decommissioning Process for Kozloduy Discussed *[POGLED 22 Mar]* 17
Berov Chairs Meeting on Energy Supply Issues *[BTA]* 18

CZECH REPUBLIC

Defense Minister Baudys Views Regional Issues *[PESTI HIRLAP 24 Mar]* 19
Ministers Discuss Agriculture Regulation *[Prague Radio]* 19
Zieleniec on Prospects for Czech-Russian Treaty *[CTK]* 20
Havel Believes Yeltsin's Reforms Will Succeed *[CTK]* 20
Government Will Not Meet Sudeten Germans *[RUDE PRAVO 23 Mar]* 20
    Havel on Sudeten Germans Issue *[Prague Radio]* 21

Tosovsky Supports Halting Transfer of Slovak Shares *[CTK]* 21
Parliament Passes Resolution on Migration *[CTK]* 22
    To Investigate Communist Repression *[CTK]* 22
Bill on Establishing Moravian Land Rejected *[CTK]* 23
State Subsidy To Be Paid to Political Parties *[CTK]* 23
CSSD Alleges Parties Used Communist Money *[CTK]* 23
KDS Deputies Rebel Against Party Chairman *[CTK]* 23
Social Democrats, Liberals Agree To Form Bloc *[Prague Radio]* 24
Charter 77 Members Ask Havel To Step Down *[Prague Radio]* 24
Manufacturing Prices Continue To Increase *[HOSPODARSKE NOVINY 23 Mar]* 24
Reported Surplus Due to Moderate Expenditures *[CTK]* 25

SLOVAKIA

German Foreign Minister Kinkel on One-Day Visit 26
    Meciar Receives Kinkel *[Bratislava Radio]* 26
    Kinkel Meets Kovac *[CTK]* 26
    Holds Joint News Conference *[Bratislava Radio]* 26
    Talks on EC, Refugees *[CTK]* 27
Meciar Wins HZDS Leadership Vote *[CTK]* 27
    Kovac Opens Congress *[CTK]* 28
    Meciar Addresses Congress *[Prague Radio]* 29
    No Changes Expected *[CTK]* 29
Meciar on Foreign Policy Activities *[Bratislava TV]* 29
Meciar Views Russian Trip, Opposition Parties *[Bratislava Radio]* 31
SDL Chairman Responds to Meciar's 'Offer' of Post *[Bratislava Radio]* 32
Protest Letter Sent to Klaus On Share Freeze *[CTK]* 32
Opposition Parties Plan to Merge *[CTK]* 32
Radio Council Responds to Director's Accusations *[Bratislava Radio]* 33
Foreign Ministry Signs Protocol With Romania *[ROMPRES]* 33

HUNGARY

Exports Show 'Drastic' Decrease; Forint Devalued *[MTI]* 34
Gross Domestic Product Falls 4-6 Percent in 1992 *[MTI]* 34
Spokesman on Enforcing Sanctions on FRY *[MTI]* 34
Lack of Funds Delays Nagymaros Demolition *[Budapest Radio]* 34

POLAND

Szwonder Interviewed on 'Rifle Affair' *[Warsaw TV]* 35
Trade Unions Propose Increase in Minimum Wage *[PAP]* 35
Solidarity, Government Agree on Enterprise Pact *[PAP]* 35
Walesa Supports 'Siec' Economic Program *[PAP]* 36
Walesa Meets Brittan, Calls For Better Cooperation *[PAP]* 36
PSL May Join Government if Economic Policy Altered *[PAP]* 36
Deputies Object To Installation of Cross in Sejm *[PAP]* 36
Ciaston: Evidence in Popieluszko Case Not 'Contradictory' *[PAP]* 37
Discussions with Germany on Asylum Law Problems *[PAP]* 37
Prime Minister Suchocka Visits Germany *[cross-reference]* 37

ROMANIA

Iliescu Welcomes Zhelev Upon Arrival *[Bucharest Radio]* 38
Zhelev, Iliescu Hold News Conference *[BTA]* 38
Iliescu on Chisinau Radio, Discussess Ties *[ROMPRES]* 39
Melescanu Receives Chinese Consular Delegation *[Bucharest Radio]* 39
Negritoiu, Attali Praise 'Constructive' Talks *[ROMPRES]* 40
Foreign Minister Views Bilateral Relations *[ROMANIAI MAGYAR SZO 18 Mar]* 40
Melescanu Returns From Italy, Reviews Visit *[Bucharest Radio]* 41
Italian Delegation Holds Talks on Export Issues *[ROMPRES]* 41

British Officers Visit Tirgu Mures Garrison *[ROMPRES]* ... 41
Army Denies Defense Minister Wishes To Resign *[Bucharest Radio]* ... 41
Defense Minister Departs for Brussels Meeting *[Bucharest Radio]* ... 42
Vacaroiu Visits Jiu Valley Mines, Hunedoara *[ROMPRES]* ... 42
Vacaroiu in Sibiu, Discusses Economic Reform *[ROMPRES]* ... 42
    Reviews Economic Priorities *[ROMPRES]* ... 42
Napoleon Pop Discusses EC Association Accord *[CURIERUL NATIONAL 22 Mar]* ... 42
    Interview Concluded *[CURIERUL NATIONAL 23 Mar]* ... 43
Roman Worries About 'Restoration' in Russia *[TINERETUL LIBER 24 Mar]* ... 44
    FSN Urges Support for Russian Reform *[AZI 23 Mar]* ... 45
    Iliescu's 'Silence' Noted *[ROMANIA LIBERA 24 Mar]* ... 46
Nastase Political 'Winner' of Censure Motion *[CURIERUL NATIONAL 22 Mar]* ... 46
Article Comments on Aim of Censure Motion *[COTIDIANUL 22 Mar]* ... 47
Marko: Nation-State Inconsistent With Diversity *[ROMPRES]* ... 48
UDMR Elects Deputies Council Standing Committee *[ROMPRES]* ... 48
    UDMR Meeting, Tokes Statements Viewed *[Bucharest Radio]* ... 48
Drop in Abortions, Slight Rise in Births Viewed *[ROMPRES]* ... 49

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

UN Commanders, Bosnian Serbs Agree on Cease-Fire ... 50
    Mladic, Wahlgren on Cease-Fire *[Belgrade Television]* ... 50
    Serbs Issue Statement on Talks *[TANJUG]* ... 50
    Sarajevo Radio: Cease-Fire Holding ... 51
    Cease-Fire Violations Reported *[Sarajevo Radio]* ... 51
    Serbs Report Violations *[TANJUG]* ... 51
    Cease-Fire Violated in Tuzla *[AFP]* ... 52
    Army To Respect Cease-Fire *[Sarajevo Radio]* ... 52
    Commentator on Serb Motives *[Sarajevo Radio]* ... 52
Agreement Reached on Demilitarization of Srebrenica *[Belgrade Radio]* ... 53
    Lukic Denies Agreement Reached *[TANJUG]* ... 53
Morillon Secures Arrest of Serb Colonel *[AFP]* ... 54
Morillon, Serbs Discuss Civilian Movement *[TANJUG]* ... 54
Interview With Karadzic on Talks in New York *[Belgrade TV]* ... 54
Izetbegovic May Withdraw Signature From Plan *[Sarajevo Radio]* ... 55
UNHCR Convoy 'Unexpectedly' Heads for Srebrenica *[TANJUG]* ... 55
UN Aid Convoy Arrives in Srebrenica *[AFP]* ... 55
Serbs Leave Tuzla on UNHCR Vehicle *[Zagreb Radio]* ... 55
Izetbegovic Gives News Conference in Zagreb *[Zagreb TV]* ... 56
TANJUG Reviews U.S. 'Promises' to Izetbegovic ... 56
Serb Assembly To Back Referendum on Country's Future *[TANJUG]* ... 57
Serb Leader Urges 'Unified State' With Krajina *[TANJUG]* ... 57
Interior Ministry Names Serb War Criminals *[Sarajevo Radio]* ... 58
'Confusion' over Germany's Airdrop Intentions *[TANJUG]* ... 58
Serbs Plunder Largest Aid Convoy *[DELO 1 Mar]* ... 59
Croats React to Izetbegovic Signing of Plan *[Zagreb Radio]* ... 60
Strategic Importance of Konjic Assessed *[DANAS 26 Feb]* ... 60
Bihac Leader Says Supplies Limited *[London AL-HAYAH 24 Mar]* ... 61

CROATIA

Sarinic Announces Government's Resignation *[Zagreb Radio]* ... 62
Tudjman, Izetbegovic Issue Statement on Peace Plan *[Sarajevo Radio]* ... 62
Tudjman Receives Defense Minister, Officers *[Zagreb Radio]* ... 62
National Security Council in Session 25 Mar *[Zagreb Radio]* ... 62
Krajina Assembly Confirms Zecevic Replacement *[Belgrade Radio]* ... 63
RSK Prime Minister Designate Outlines Plans *[TANJUG]* ... 63
Paspalj Wins Krajina Assembly Vote of Confidence *[Belgrade Radio]* ... 63
Hadzic Notes Serbs' Lack of 'Clear Platform' at Talks *[TANJUG]* ... 64
RSK 'Will Not Change' Position on Troop Withdrawal *[TANJUG]* ... 64
Thornberry on Extension of UNPROFOR Mandate *[TANJUG]* ... 64

Fighting Resumes on North Dalmation Battlefield *[TANJUG]* 65
Serbs Reportedly Attack Zadar, Killing Girl *[Zagreb Radio]* 65
Zagreb Radio Views Progress of Peace Plan 65
Commentary Claims Herzeg-Bosnia Hampers Croatia *[SLOBODNA DALMACIJA 21 Mar]* 66
Number of Croatian Casualties Estimated *[DANAS 5 Mar]* 67
Church's Role in Elections Assessed *[VJESNIK 21 Feb]* 70
HDZ Official on State, Election Results *[VJESNIK 21 Feb]* 71
Government Program To Help Unemployed Described *[VJESNIK 28 Feb]* 73

YUGOSLAVIA

Federal

UN, Bosnian Serb Army Officials Meet in Belgrade *[Belgrade Radio]* 75
Army Chief Receives UN, Bosnian Serb Commanders *[TANJUG]* 75
Jovanovic Comments on New York Talks. *[Belgrade TV]* 75
Inflation Reaches Record Monthly High *[TANJUG]* 76
Solvency of Vasiljevic Bank Questioned *[TANJUG]* 76
Economist Explains Role of Private Banks *[BORBA 27-28 Feb]* 77
Bank Official Explains Dinar Circulation *[BORBA 27-28 Feb]* 78
Commentary Criticizes Western Role in Talks *[POLITIKA 8 Mar]* 79
Importance of Serbian 'Corridors' Stressed *[POLITIKA 28 Feb]* 80
Ethnic Discrimination in Army Alleged *[BORBA 12 Mar]* 81
Air Force Reportedly Deploying Biochemical Weapons *[DNEVNIK 5 Mar]* 82

Serbia

Premier Greets Serb, UN Officials Prior to Talks *[TANJUG]* 82
Trade Union Body Reports Strike Well Supported *[TANJUG]* 83
Arrest of Trade Minister Analyzed *[POLITIKA 3 Mar]* 83
French, Serbian Managers Establish Contacts *[EKONOMSKA POLITIKA 1 Mar]* 84
Republic's Electric Power System Overburdened *[POLITIKA 9 Mar]* 85
Employees in Karic Bank Resign Collectively *[POLITIKA 9 Mar]* 86
Conflict Between Police, Black-Marketeers Viewed *[POLITIKA 9 Mar]* 86
Russian Journalists' Impressions of Serbia *[POLITIKA 19 Feb]* 87
Micunovic on Friendship With Russia *[BORBA 27-28 Feb]* 88

Montenegro

Bulatovic: Sanctions Not Reason for Secession *[TANJUG]* 88

Kosovo

Rugova Demands Province Be Put on UNSC Agenda *[ATA]* 89
Province's Albanian Political Scene Discussed *[VREME 8 Mar]* 89
Formation of New Assembly Discussed *[DNEVNIK 11 Mar]* 90

Karadzic Reviews Peace Plan Signing, Travel Agenda

AU2603172793 Belgrade Radio Beograd Network in Serbo-Croatian 1608 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Interview with Radovan Karadzic, president of the Presidency of the Serbian Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, by Slobodan Jankovic; place not given—live]

[Text] [Karadzic] This round of talks was aimed exclusively at getting the signature of the Muslims. I cannot say that we were subjected to any explicit pressures. Namely, the cochairmen [Cyrus Vance and Lord Owen] progress stage by stage. First they pleased the Croats very much in any respect to get one side that would sign and two sides that would argue. Now they managed to get the signature of the Muslims through various maneuvers. We knew that this signature was about to come, although numerous people were persuading us to sign the plan as the Muslims allegedly would not. After all this, they must now pay attention to the Serbs, to satisfy the Serbian side, otherwise, the conference will flop.

[Jankovic] I gather your plans are to travel to Moscow and the assembly [of the Serbian Republic] session. What are your expectations concerning these two events?

[Karadzic] I believe that the order will be reversed, first the assembly and its conclusions and then Moscow, perhaps even Athens, or even some other, very distant countries, in search of support for the decisions of the Serbian Assembly, that is to say, for the rights of the Serbian people.

Italy Requests Slovenia, Croatia Revise Osimo Accords

LD2503181593 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1718 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] Zagreb, March 25 (TANJUG)—Italy has requested from Slovenia and Croatia the revision of the Osimo Accords, which were signed in 1975 to regulate controversial questions between former Yugoslavia and Italy.

In an interview to the Zagreb weekly VLOBUS, Colombo [Italian foreign minister] said that talks should be renewed on some aspects of the accords in order to adjust them to the present situation.

Colombo said that the accords would be revised in the field of the protection of the Italian minority in the former Yugoslav Republics of Slovenia and Croatia and, especially, the part concerning "compensation for the property expropriated and nationalized from Italians during the Yugoslav socialist regime" in areas which became Yugoslav territories after World War Two.

The Italian foreign minister said that the Slovenian and Croatian sides had shown readiness to open talks on the matter and that it had made possible the setting up of special national commissions which should jointly determine the topics to be discussed.

Over the past few months, the Italian public has been calling for a revision of the Osimo Accords and the press has especially pointed out the endangered position of the Italian minority in Croatia.

At the initiative of the Italian daily IL GIORNALE, over 140,000 signatures were collected last February in a petition asking the Italian authorities to demand urgent revision of the Osimo Accords.

The Italian press has also wrote that the revision of the accords should be discussed not only with Slovenia and Croatia but with Belgrade and other parts of former Yugoslavia, who were its signatories.

According to the 1991 population census in former Yugoslavia, around 15,000 ethnic Italians live mostly along the Adriatic coast in the territory of Croatia and Slovenia.

Croat Daily on Russian Role in Balkans

93BA0708C Zagreb DANAS in Serbo-Croatian 26 Feb 93 p 48

[Article by Kresimir Fijacko: "Cats, Mice, and the Russian Factor"]

[Text] A paraphrase of a quite recent Chinese political joke, which says that it does not matter whether cats are black or gray, just so they hunt mice, might be: It does not matter whether the Russians are interested in meddling in the Balkans because of Orthodox solidarity or again because of internal motives; the important thing is that their appearance in the Balkans complicates the situation still more. At least for the present.

According to some theories, "the Russian parliament was not so interested in Serbia as in bringing down Yeltsin by destroying his tie-up with U.S. policy." As a matter of fact, the contest between the Russian president and his parliament over what Moscow's policy in the Balkans is to be became dramatic only after Clinton invited Yeltsin to join the search for a solution to the "Yugocrisis" or the war on the soil of the former Yugoslavia. Clinton's reasons for that move, over the long term and from the U.S. viewpoint, are understandable and far-reaching. Washington sees Yeltsin as a guarantee to save Russia from additional chaos, and the balance of power and atmosphere in the Russian parliament support him in that opinion. Helping Yeltsin, who is "slipping," to extricate himself from threatening domestic storms, so that he will strengthen his international position today, signifies for the United States the playing of a card to gain a stable partner in the future. The price is recognition of Russian interests in the Balkans.

The perils or risk of bringing Yeltsin in this way onto the international political scene are not small and are already visible. In his wrestling match with parliament over authority, that is, Yeltsin has necessarily also dragged his domestic opponents onto the world political scene. Which is to say that Yeltsin is now defending himself not in Moscow, but in Bosnia!

With his peace plan for Bosnia-Herzegovina, that is, to resolve the "Yugoslav crisis," which was made public on Wednesday, Yeltsin is not only supporting the Vance and Owen peace plan (from which Clinton backed off a bit), but also promising Belgrade that "after the Serbian side signs the package of the Vance and Owen agreement, conditions will be brought about for gradually removing the sanctions against the FRY and for assuring the FRY normal participation in the bodies of the United Nations and other international organizations" (Point 4 of Yeltsin's plan). Two points before that, Yeltsin's eight-point plan devotes to nurturing the theory of equal guilt and says that "all military actions in Croatia must necessarily be terminated," and "unless the mandate of the UN peacekeeping forces is effectively strengthened, Russia will continue to stress the issue of sanctions in the Security Council."

It takes no more than those two points of Yeltsin's plan to reveal the sandwich principle of "a layer of Yeltsin, a layer of the Russian parliament." The threat of insistence on sanctions (even against Croatia!) is actually that "dragging" of the Russian parliament onto the stage; it recently passed a shocking demand for sanctions even against the victims in the war in the Balkans. That decision of the Russian parliament, to be sure, places no obligation either on Kozyrev or Yeltsin to conform to it in the Security Council, but, as we see, it has found a way to get into Yeltsin's peace plan.

One top Russian diplomat said the other day in Zagreb that "only one truth about the war is reaching Moscow, and that is the Serbian truth." The Italian newspaper LA REPUBBLICA goes even further and even writes that that resolution of the Russian parliament threatening that sanctions will be demanded against Croatia is the "result of immense amounts of money which the Serbian powers that be have sent from Cyprus to pockets in Moscow," and "the principal consequence of that political-financial transaction is that it has halted the weakening of the positions of the Belgrade regime."

Without going into an examination of that assertion (for which the Italian journalist found support among Belgrade sources), let us just mention the interview that Slobodan Milosevic gave to PRAVDA of Moscow. What was said in that interview might be called a kind of "call for the Russians to rebel against the international community." Milosevic said: "All the citizens of your state do not know how matters really stand, because if they knew, they would never have allowed Russia to take part in the sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro. Russia's participation in the sanctions is shameful for your country!"

As far as the sanctions themselves are concerned, Yeltsin actually retreated a bit, announcing in his plan the possibility of the sanctions being moderated if the Serbs accept the Vance and Owen plan, and insistence on sanctions even against Croatia "unless they terminate the conflicts in Croatia."

The question concerns the basis on which Yeltsin allows himself to offer such promises to Serbia. As for the other thing, that is, the threat of sanctions against all parties to the conflict, here the sources of such reflections are somewhat clearer.

If Yeltsin did receive from the United States the assignment of influencing Belgrade, and if, then, even his newest initiative is only a part of a broader plan, it is a fact that at least at present the appearance of Russian diplomacy in the Balkans has done more to encourage Milosevic than to calm him down. Which is not even to mention the Russian volunteers—there are already said to be nearly 1,000 of them in Bosnia, and new ones have been announced—official Moscow speaks of their activity as a "regrettable occurrence" and something which is beyond its control.

Clinton brought Yeltsin into the Balkans, the threat from the Russian parliament arrived after Yeltsin, and the Russian volunteers are arriving "all by themselves." Thus, for the present, what the Russian factor is doing above all is to increase the risks and make things less clear. This has neither rescued Yeltsin, nor has it tamed Serbia.

Serb Weekly on Turkey's 'Imperialistic' Ambitions

93BA0709E Belgrade NIN in Serbo-Croatian 26 Feb 93 pp 48-49

[Article by Dusan Miklja: "The Encirclement of Serbia"]

[Text] Sofia—The term "encirclement" is usually used in the military vocabulary. By using it to describe the objective of his Balkan trip, the Turkish representative, Turgut Ozal, revealed at least subconsciously that the visits of statesmen need not necessarily be solely political in nature.

At a meeting in Istanbul, which even the Turkish newspapers judged to be "historically anti-Serbian," he himself confirmed that he was setting out on the round-trip with stops in Bulgaria, Macedonia, Albania, and Croatia not to weave a wreath, but a noose.

If only it had amounted to no more than "kindling Islamic sentiment," even if accompanied by "fundamentalist drums." At the very first step, unfortunately, it turned out that the janissary music was only the introduction to much more serious and certainly more dangerous undertakings. Without taking too much trouble to disguise his true intentions, Ozal turned up in Sofia with more than 100 people in his party, making it known in this way that imperialistic ambitions were not buried together with the sultans.

The guest, of course, took even this occasion to reiterate Turkey's willingness, expressed several times, to become involved in military conflicts in Bosnia, magnanimously consenting to have the United Nations provide the cover for that intervention. The opinion of those to whom he talked in Bulgaria departed strikingly from that position, and this was also uttered several times, to the effect that the Balkan countries and neighboring countries should restrain from direct military involvement.

Safe Passage for the Army?

These differences were evident not only in what Ozal and his host, Bulgarian President Zhelev, said to journalists, but also in the official communique concerning the talks. Any suspicion that the Turkish president's visit to Sofia, the first visit in 10 years, was not accompanied by any other less mysterious phenomena, then, would be superfluous. It was thus leaked by Cumhuriyet of Ankara back in January that considerably before Ozal's visit Turkey had requested from Bulgaria safe passage for its military forces. Referring to THE ECONOMIST of London, that same paper even said that refusing that request cost Filip Dimitrov, who at that time was Bulgarian prime minister, his prime minister's post, because after losing support of the Turkish minority's party in the parliament, he had to submit his resignation.

The initiative late last year of a group of opposition deputies who made a motion in the parliament to ban the passage of a foreign army over its territory indicates that the corridor did not arise only in a journalist's imagination. Although a motion so stated need not necessarily pertain to Turkey, the belief that it was the origin of the request was indirectly expressed by the present prime minister, Lyuban Barov. I do not see why Turkey, he said, if it so much wanted to be in the vicinity of the battlefield of the conflict, does not send its military forces by a roundabout, but possible, sea route to the Adriatic. It is not difficult to spot in these words the bad temper of someone who has been ceaselessly annoyed with the same demand.

Ahmed Dogan, leader of the Movement for Rights and Freedoms (the party of the Turkish minority in Bulgaria), thus did not hesitate in the least to make a public demand for military intervention in the Bosnian conflict, on the side of the Muslims, of course. It would really be very strange and even unlikely if he did not express such demands immediately after his return from Ankara. The leadership of the Alliance of Democratic Forces, reacting to Dogan's excited militance, recalled that it had reiterated the position on nonintervention several times, while the president of the Socialist Party had declared that a "military outcome" of the Yugoslav crisis is "extremely undesirable."

Overtaking the Lag

In view of these assurances, there is an unusual ring to the assessment of Defense Minister Valentin Aleksandrov, who says that "in certain areas Bulgaria's military ties with Turkey surpass those diplomatic ties." The minister made that declaration in a talk with the commander of the ground forces of the Turkish Army, General Muhutin Fiounoglu, who in late January led a military delegation on a visit to Bulgaria. Can we take it only as a coincidence that a delegation from the German Bundeswehr was visiting Sofia at just about the same time?

If no mention was made, at least in public, of any military corridors at that time, corridors for travelers were given considerable publicity. Turkey thus proposed building a modern highway that would start in Istanbul and end at the port of Durres in Albania, by way of Sofia and Skopje. The Bulgarian state railroads have also prepared a proposal to build a railroad that would link Sofia and Skopje.

Bulgarian railroad connections with the west and with Macedonia now pass through Nis. It is notable that the proposed alternatives, so far only hypothetical, because they cut across the Balkan Peninsula horizontally, have an importance not only to transportation and business, but also to strategy.

The Turkish president confirmed that the generous offers of military aid are lasting in nature in Macedonia as well, on whose officials, judging by the reports of a "highly ceremonial welcome," Ozal's imperial escort left a greater impression than in Sofia. Assistance in the form of military experts and weapons, as a "barrier to Serbian ambitions," then, was accepted with a leniency which can only be compared to the Albanian consent to offer its territory to Turkey as a bridgehead. There is no need for specific proof, of course, in spite of the scant reports, that in Zagreb there is both enough yarn and enough enthusiasm for encirclement of Serbia.

Nevertheless, one is struck by the mutual patting on the back for "democratic" achievements, presumably in resolving the Kurdish and Armenian questions in Turkey and the Serbian question in Croatia. Judging by the statement about the "natural alliance of Muslims and Croats," which Pavelic gladly made use of in his time, one can suspect that the same kind of "genocidal democracy" is also intended for the Serbs in Bosnia.

There were also mutual assurances of the "particular importance of Croatia" as a state "in the first line of the front against the Serbian danger" and of Turkey, whose importance in Zagreb was described in almost the same terms as the unattainable German influence.

Does this mean that Ozal's jihad junket was entirely successful? However paradoxical it might sound, even the large-circulation HURIYET does not believe that! That daily not only wonders whether such a policy has a purpose, but also whether it allows Turkey to preserve its image as a "secular and democratic country."

HURIYET is not alone in putting such questions. They are being pondered with much more perplexity and anxiety in the other Balkan states as well. It is not only Bulgaria that has reserves toward a military solution, but so does Romania and especially Greece. The diplomatic activity, which in its frequency and extent can even be compared to a "torrent," indicates a desire, but not a necessity, to find a peaceful solution. Immediately after he hosted German Foreign Minister Kinkel, the Greek foreign minister, Papakonstantinou, made a trip to Sofia, where he talked to Prime Minister Barov, who was also acting as foreign minister. Papakonstantinou continued from the capital of Bulgaria to Bucharest. Before he met Turkish President Ozal, Bulgarian President Zhelev visited Tirana and Skopje.

Although the visit to Skopje was unofficial in nature, and the occasion for it was the Macedonian edition of Zhelev's book, *Fascism*, the Bulgarian president, as enthusiastically noted by the reporter of TRUD, the Sofia newspaper with the largest circulation, was received like Emperor Boris. Before the entire Macedonian elite, according to the reports of the Bulgarian press, Zhelev refused the services of a translator, desiring to emphasize by this gesture, as for that matter he explicitly said in an interview with NOVA MAKEDONIJA, that the Bulgarians and Macedonians, aside from a common history, culture, and religion, also have a common language.

The incident with the translator, or, still more accurately, the refusal of his services, evoked a torrent of criticism in the press addressed to television because of translation of the toasts from Macedonian to Bulgarian. TRUD criticized it for "translating from one Bulgarian dialect to another," which was also the essence of the criticism in the newspaper DUME. Television, facing the unexpectedly numerous and by no means harmless accusations, defended itself by saying that actually it had not translated them, but only "cleared up the language by removing Serbisms."

A Reading of History

It is not difficult to conclude from this episode that Sofia sees the Bulgarians and Macedonians as one people, which is why it recognized the state, but not the nationality. Greece recognizes the nationality, but refuses to recognize the state, which, as Athens asserts, has appropriated a Greek name. Turkey in turn recognizes both the nationality and the state, especially if it can serve it as a beachhead. Other combinations of two or more moves and even offers or extortion of a sacrifice whose outcome, just as in chess, cannot always be predicted with certainty are, of course, also possible.

The "diplomatic torrent," then, might also be described as a feverish race for the best possible geopolitical position in a time of tectonic political disturbances. In view of the fact that the Balkans, although very important, are nevertheless not so important as Russo-U.S. relations or an eye on sources of petroleum, for example, the "buzzing" of the statesmen can also be seen as governed by the law of physics whereby particles on the periphery of a circle move faster than those at the center.

In proportion to the increased number of unresolved issues (as we have seen, not only the "Serbian," but also the "Macedonian" question, as well as many others which have not, at least at this point, been so dramatically represented), diplomatic and political activities, but also military activities, are also on the rise. If we are to judge from historical experience, attempts to resolve any of these questions by force have up to now regularly turned into regional and even world conflicts. The only real uncertainty, then, is contained in the question, and again there is only one: Will the "diplomatic torrent" extinguish the fuse of the Balkan "powder keg" that has already been lighted, or, before it reaches it, will it be buried in the quicksand of mutual distrust and of unreliable alliances and axes denounced by history?

Perhaps Bulgarian President Zhelev actually had in mind this "reading" of history when he was asked a newsman's question as to whether "the recently intensified and emphasized cooperation between Bulgaria and Turkey is aimed at reestablishing a permanent alliance" replied that Sofia "will not enter into any regional pacts" nor will it grease the "regional axles."

History can, of course, be interpreted in that other traditional Balkan way as well. But then there is no longer only the "reading" of the past, but also the "guessing," in this case certain, of always the same future.

Visegrad Defense Ministers Discuss NATO Ties

LD2903082893 Prague CTK in English 0747 GMT 29 Mar 93

[Text] Brussels March 29 (CTK correspondents)—The defence ministers of the Visegrad group countries met in Brussels Sunday [28 March] to discuss the way in which they would approach and communicate with the NATO alliance, Czech Defence Minister Antonin Baudys told CTK after the meeting.

In striving for a possible association with NATO each of the Visegrad group countries (comprising Hungary, Poland and the Czech and Slovak Republics) would act on its own, Baudys said. But their attitudes to the question of NATO membership are very similar, Baudys said.

He thus indirectly denied the words by Slovak Defence Minister Imrich Andrejcak who said after the meeting that the ministers agreed on a common policy towards NATO.

Baudys said the Visegrad group members approve of the idea that their representatives be sent to NATO and, on the other hand, NATO representatives sent to them, a line already taken by Warsaw. This, according to Baudys, would make communication between NATO and the Visegrad group countries easier.

The Visegrad group was described by Baudys as a consultative and coordinating body.

Baudys is to go to Slovakia soon to work out several agreements between the two countries' Armed Forces. According to him, in his discussion with Andrejcak they agreed no problems exist in relations between the two republics' Armed Forces.

Slovakia Proposes Hungarian Border Agreement

AU2503161993 Prague CTK in English 2203 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Text] Budapest March 23 (CTK correspondent)—The Slovak Foreign Minister Jozef Moravcik has proposed to his Hungarian counterpart, Geza Jeszenszky, that Slovakia and Hungary conclude an agreement which would guarantee that their current joint border remain unchanged.

According to information obtained by CTK from diplomatic sources, the proposal was brought up at today's meeting between both ministers here.

Moravcik confirmed the information at a press conference following the meeting.

He told journalists that Hungary has received the Slovak initiative with interest and added that signing such an agreement would contribute to the establishment of a better atmosphere in Slovak-Hungarian relations.

According to diplomatic sources, however, Budapest demanded that Bratislava guarantee the security of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia, in return for its willingness to guarantee the inviolability of the existing Slovak-Hungarian border. Jeszenszky allegedly told Moravcik that the Hungarian minority in Slovakia feels threatened. He named some concrete facts testifying to discrimination against the Hungarian minority such as a current law making Slovak the official language, the removal of Hungarian-language street signs in South Slovak towns and difficulties faced by minority education.

According to Bratislava, the agreement guaranteeing the border's inviolability might be included as an independent clause in a basic bilateral treaty between Slovakia and Hungary but it might also be concluded as a separate document. According to information available, no agreement on this point was reached.

Slovakia Will Not Alter Gas Pipeline Agreement

AU2503141293 Prague CTK in English 2153 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Text] Prague/Bratislava March 23 (CTK)—An agreement on property settlement and continued operation of the transit gas pipeline is likely to be signed by the Czech and Slovak Republics by the end of this week, Czech Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade Vratislav Ludvik told CTK today.

The bilateral agreement stipulates the Czech Republic will pay the Slovak Republic a transit fee of 1.3 USD per 1,000 cubic metres of gas transported over 100 kilometres. A clearing arrangement for payments will be used according to terms agreed on under the agreement, which is part of an overall property settlement resulting from the split of the Czechoslovak Federal Republic January 1, 1993.

The document also governs allocation on a two-to-one ratio in favour of the Czech Republic of gas supplied to repay the former Czechoslovakia's investments in the former Soviet Union at the time of the gas pipeline construction. This point has already been agreed on with Slovakia.

The agreement's outlines are firm and will not be altered, Imrich Sitas, the head of a department at the Slovak Economics Ministry, said.

The agreement is likely to be approved at the next meeting of the (Slovak) Government and there is nothing to prevent the two economics ministers from signing it and the life from going back to normal, Sitas said.

The Czech Government approved the agreement at its session March 17.

Berisha Relegates Army to Nonpolitical Life

AU2703133193 Tirana Radio Tirana Network in Albanian 1830 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Arben Karapici telephone report from Gjirokaster]

[Text] Sali Berisha, commander in chief of our Armed Forces and chairman of the Defense Council, proclaimed the decision to relegate the Army to a new organizational structure based on barracks. This is an important measure that strengthens the defense and militarily integrates Albania into Europe, Berisha said to the Gjirokaster Division.

Speaking before the high-ranking Defense Ministry and Army officers who were in Gjirokaster, Berisha said that this reorganization serves the defense policy and the preservation of peace and stability in the Balkan region and beyond. Berisha stressed that this is a necessary process because political integration into Europe requires the military integration of our country into the European military structures, especially the Atlantic Alliance. This should help our Army to modernize and adapt to NATO structures. Berisha said that the Atlantic Alliance is supporting this kind of restructuring in our Army.

Berisha also called for high-level training without lowering defensive alertness because, as he said in regard to [Serbian President] Milosevic, dictators are dictators. The president said that our primary duty is to strengthen the new democratic state and our defense policy. The democratic society is the future of Albania, because only in democracy and through democracy can the national aspirations of the people become a reality. Reform is marching forward because we apply it with determination, Berisha said. The application of this reform is in the interest of everyone.

Defense Minister Safet Zhulali also spoke. He said that the goal is to create a functional and trained army based on a scientific military art. Zhulali said the restructuring comes at a time of very special importance. This is done at a time of deep political changes in our country and Europe. A barracks structure is necessitated by the political needs arising from the new democratic system and the present situation in the Balkan region. Zhulali described the Balkan situation as hot and explosive.

Zhulali said that changing our Army structure requires bravery, and this bravery springs from the conviction and determination to carry out reform. Powerful political support for this change comes from the democratic neighboring countries. Zhulali stressed that the success of this reform is guaranteed by the support that NATO gives it, referring to the visits that the chairman of the Military Committee and the NATO secretary general himself made in our country.

Zhulali said he hoped that the officers and all our soldiers will fully commit themselves to this restructuring, which strengthens our national defense. Relegation to the barracks puts an end once and for all to the political treatment of our Army staff, Zhulali said. Officers are officers and not politicians. Military laws and regulations should prevail in the Army, and not the policy of this or that party, this or that government, our defense minister stressed.

Mayor General Baki Shehi, deputy chief of the Army General Staff, also spoke. He delivered the primary instructions regarding the reorganization process, a process that begins with the Gjirokaster Division.

Meets With Minority Representatives

AU2803153493 Tirana Radio Tirana Network in Albanian 1830 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Arben Karapici telephone report from Gjirokaster]

[Text] Our democratic state should work harder to strengthen the cultural identities of minority groups, President Berisha said in a meeting with hundreds of people who have come to Gjirokaster to represent all the areas populated by minorities. They have come from Delvine, Sarande, Permet, Tepelene, and Himare.

Giving a complete guarantee for the fulfillment of this goal, Berisha said that this should not be considered a gift but a democratic right that the Greek minority has won. Berisha said this attitude toward minorities is proof of a powerful democracy being built in the new Albanian state. The pluralism that has already been established has granted broad latitude to the Greek minority, which is a bridge between the two oldest Balkan cultures, Greek and Albanian. Berisha said that these cultures have coexisted in a harmonious way by nourishing and supporting each other. These opportunities for harmonious coexistence are created by the new European integration processes which, for us, start with integration with our neighbors in democratic systems. Berisha urged everyone to find every means to make minority relations a bridge of friendship for the Albanian people.

Berisha later assessed the atmosphere of good faith that exists in relations between the ethnic Albanian and minority groups. Berisha said that this good faith will be further strengthened, assuring once again that the state will fully respect the international agreements that have been signed and that will be signed in the future.

He continued by analyzing the present situation in the Balkan region, stressing the necessity to fight those he called throwbacks to the Balkan past. Democracy, understanding, and good faith are strengthened in the fight against these people. He said that it reflects on the honor of the majority, referring to the Albanian people, to respect the rights of the Greek minority.

Speaking about freedom of religion, Berisha said that there is no obstacle to worship in the minority churches.

Berisha did warn, however, about the anti-Albanian policy that certain groups in Greece pursue against our country. He addressed the representatives of the Greek minority living in Albania, saying that you should give the best answer to these attitudes that are not official in Greece. Religion should not be confused with ideological principles as this has consequences, as the policy followed by Sebastianos under the guise of a priest is not without consequences, Berisha said.

After Berisha's speech, the minority representatives posed many questions and raised many issues, such as having the right to education in the Greek language and for more proper representation in the state administrative bodies.

Berisha held another meeting in Gjirokaster with the presidency of the city and district municipality. Emphasizing the problems that local governments encounter today, the president said that partisan politics should not hinder the activities of this government. The status of an employee that will soon be approved will make our employees in a democratic state not be the targets of partisan goals. This will greatly improve the work of local government.

Mayor Bashkim Sino said later that there are good relations among the political groups in the Gjirokaster local government and that Gjirokaster should become the example of these democratic relations among the people in power.

Berisha then was informed in detail about the course of the economic reform in Gjirokaster and the accompanying problems.

Defense Minister Zhulali Leaves for Brussels

AU2903093493 Tirana ATA in English 0818 GMT 29 Mar 93

[Text] Tirana, March 29 (ATA)—On March 28, the minister of defence, Safet Zhulali, left for Brussels at the invitation of NATO Secretary General Manfred Woerner. It is the first time that Mr. Zhulali takes part in the meeting of the ministers of defence of the NATO member countries and of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council.

The Albanian delegation is also made up of the chief of the army general staff, Lieutenant-General Ilia Vasho and the deputy minister of foreign affairs, Arjan Starova.

The Albanian minister of defence plans to meet and talk with some counterparts on problems of mutual interest especially those related to the situation in the region.

Editor Charged With Spreading False Information

AU2703214693 Tirana Radio Tirana Network in Albanian 1830 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Text] The General Prosecutors Office spokesman confirmed to ATA that on 26 March the Tirana District Prosecutors Office began legal proceedings concerning the report published on 24 March by the newspaper KOHA JONE, headlined Dozens of Tanks Toward the Southeastern Border.

The investigation confirmed that the published report is false. It has been established that the Defense Ministry has not sent or concentrated tanks to the southeastern or northern borders of Albania, as alleged by the author of the article.

For these reasons, the Tirana Prosecutors Office charged KOHA JONE Editor in Chief Aleksander Frangaj with the criminal act of spreading false information that arouses panic, as defined by Article 124 of the Penal Code. Security measures were taken by confining the defendant at home under guarded house arrest.

Students Protest Professor's Dismissal

AU2603163293 Lezhe KOHA JONE in Albanian 17 Mar 93 p 3

[Unattributed report: "Students Protest Dismissal of Professors for Political Reasons"]

[Text] After the strike staged by the Kamez University students against the unfounded dismissals of their professors, a similar case is appearing at Tirana University. The fifth year students of the Mechanical Engineering Faculty sent a petition to the dean's office concerning the demotion of their professor, Shkelqim Zeqja. "We are the most ardent supporters of reform in the university," they stressed, "but not of the settling of accounts and subjective desires about the staff, which are carried out under the guise of reform... That is why we become indignant when injustices and speculations of this nature are done in the name of the democracy that we brought about. Unfortunately we have learned that not only Shkelqim Zeqja, but also other professors are being purged on absurd pretexts." They continue by saying, "if you really want to introduce reform, you should consult the 'barometer of the professors' efficiency,' which is the students."

The petition was signed by 123 students who have given a ten-day period for their demands to be met. The reaction of the dean's office and the Education Ministry is not known. Will, perhaps, the situation be aggravated as with the Kamez University students?

Commentary Outlines Foreign Policy Objectives

LD2603185393 Tirana Radio Tirana in English 1530 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] The following opinion features the question of the [words indistinct] who speaks about the foreign policy of the Albanian democratic government that came into being after the elections of 22d March.

The Albanian foreign policy has at its foundations two priorities, which means at the same time the two (holding) pillars of its actual and (constructive) activities. The first, the consolidation of democracy in Albania, trying hard to get out of the prolonged isolation, to improve the wrong image prevailing in the world about Albania, closely connected with Albania's integration in the world. And the second, the [words indistinct] participation of the new Albanian diplomacy for a just and realistic solution of the whole Albanian issue closely related to the situation in the region and worldwide.

It's very important to mention here that during a very short but very intensified period the new diplomacy presents a new method to achieve the aims and results. The newer diplomatic activities through the participation of the representative, [words indistinct] of all international levels and direct political contact with personalities (from) the world diplomacy, exchange visits, (refrain) the (then) propaganda of the totalitarian closed-door school.

The focus of these activities is the development of multilateral relations which opens the way to the bilateral relations with reciprocal profit. The (roles) and the essence of diplomatic talks have changed a lot, doing away with those (objects formally) and diplomatic problems. The Albanian side has been presenting very logical and positive values on the solving of problems which Albanian policy is being [word indistinct] with. Quite often the clear ideas and projects that our diplomats have put forward based on the full acquaintance of the regional situation, are being taken into consideration, finding their way not only in the agenda of the high-level foreign [word indistinct] but even in the final resolutions.

Another very important plan of our new diplomacy and democratic state [words indistinct] has been the opening of political ways for economical agreements and encouragement of foreign investors. The government is completely committed to high-level meetings and economic directions thought up only for this reason. It is also being initiated on the signing of a considerable number of agreements supporting our institutions to [word indistinct] these agreements a reality. The high level of presentation in meetings and diplomatic political visits has also been a characteristic of the democratic government.

Our President Sali Berisha is the leader of all new diplomatic activity. On his own initiative he has [words indistinct] a lot of very important meetings. People's Assembly [words indistinct] organ has also played a very important role in this direction. This is the aspects of the diplomatic activity of the high diplomatic staff which is [word indistinct] by the president, the speaker of the parliament and the government.

Zhelev Departs on Visit to Romania

AU2703154293 Sofia Khorizont Radio Network in Bulgarian 1000 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Text] On 27 March President Zhelyu Zhelev departed for Romania for a one-day official visit. Prior to his departure, Zhelev said that Romania is a neighboring country with which we must coordinate our positions on the Balkan problems. We must have similar if not identical positions, he said. Three groups of issues will be discussed at the meeting with Romanian President Iliescu—bilateral relations, the Balkan situation, and the situation in Russia. Afterward, the same issues will be discussed at a plenary meeting of the two delegations.

Returns From Bucharest

AU2703190493 Sofia Khorizont Radio Network in Bulgarian 1700 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Text] President Zhelyu Zhelev returned from Romania about 30 minutes ago at the end of a one-day official visit at Romanian President Ion Iliescu's invitation. Correspondent Rumen Petrov was our special correspondent in Bucharest during the visit:

[Begin Petrov recording] Bulgaria and Romania will not allow themselves to be drawn into the conflict in former Yugoslavia. They reject the idea of foreign military intervention and support a political solution to the problem, Iliescu said.

Zhelev said that there are no Bulgarian volunteers in the war in Bosnia-Hercegovina. The two presidents support Yeltsin. This is not merely personal support but, rather, support for the democratic forces and reforms in Russia, Zhelev said.

All this was said during a joint news conference by the two presidents, at which they informed the media about the results of their dialogue. They gave this news conference after their private meeting. Separate bilateral meetings were conducted by members of the delegations, and there was a joint plenary meeting of the delegations.

Zhelev and Iliescu are satisfied with the visit. The reasons became clear at the news conference. In addition to the similar positions on the political issues which I already mentioned, the two sides stressed their bilateral relations in a very specific context.

Deputy Foreign Minister Dimitur Ikonomov and Madial Dimu, state secretary at the Romanian Foreign Ministry, signed a three-year protocol on permanent consultations on issues of common interest.

Next week in Sofia experts from the Joint Intergovernmental Commission on Economic and Scientific-Technical Cooperation will meet. After the meeting today they have the consent of the two presidents to pursue ideas such as the establishment of a joint bank and chamber of commerce, adopting measures on alleviating transportation communications through new ferry boats and the accelerated planning of two new bridges, probably between Vidin and Calafati and between Silistra and Calarasi, as well as establishing joint customs controls.

Later Bucharest will host a meeting of the two chairmen of the commission and thus prepare for a meeting of the two prime ministers at which the agreements reached today will be implemented.

Those are the more important results of the visit—seven hours which as we all hope, will bring Bulgaria and Romania even closer together. [end recording]

This is what President Zhelev told correspondent Lilyana Yankulova upon arriving in Sofia:

[Begin Zhelev recording] I think that we achieved everything our delegation went to Bucharest for. In bilateral relations, we agreed on everything we wanted to agree on, and I think that there will be results. Other issues we discussed included the embargo, Balkan problems, and so forth. Our positions are similar, perhaps with very negligible differences. For me it was very important to close this circle of contacts our diplomats conduct with our Balkan neighbors to coordinate our positions with all the neighboring Balkan states. [end recording]

NATO Air Commander Ashe Arrives

AU2803195593 Sofia BTA in English 1517 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] Sofia, March 28 (BTA)—Lieutenant General Joseph Ashe of the U.S. Air Force, commander of NATO's Allied Air Forces-South, arrived on a three-day official visit to Sofia, at the invitation of the chief of General Staff of the Bulgarian Army, Army General Lyuben Petrov.

The visit will seek to promote friendship and understanding between the NATO and Bulgarian Air Forces, according to the U.S. General, who spoke to reporters upon his arrival. He says the military is aiming to stop the war in Yugoslavia.

The NATO officer will meet with the Bulgarian Army's chief of General Staff and with Deputy Defence Minister Khristo Tomov and visit military installations.

Videnov Cautious on New Elections Issue

AU2703190093 Sofia BTA in English 1810 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Article by Iva Toncheva: "Socialists Hold Key to Early Elections, Act With Caution"]

[Text] Sofia, March 27 (BTA)—The Bulgarian Socialist Party (the former Communists) is holding a national conference this weekend. It is expected to adopt two documents, a resolution and a document entitled "A Perspective for Bulgaria."

Despite losing the parliamentary elections in October 1991, the BSP retained a strong influence on society and parliament. After the split of the parliamentary majority of the Union of Democratic Forces (SDS) and the ethnic Turks' Movement for Rights and Freedoms (DPS) and of the parliamentary SDS, the Socialists are the largest parliamentary faction. According to the latest estimates, the party has 380,000 members. The votes of socialist MP's were decisive in the election late last year of the present cabinet led by non- partisan economist Lyuben Berov, (on the DPS mandate).

Two weeks ago the anti-communist Union of Democratic Forces (SDS), whose government resigned last October, spoke for early parliamentary elections. The ball is now with Socialists.

In his report to the conference today, BSP leader Zhan Videnov said "the country needs new policies to settle society's grave problems." "Allegations elections would hamper the reform are superficial and groundless. We are not speaking about elections at any time or at any cost, regardless of the effect. Elections as an expression of public despair would be senseless. But they would be completely natural and acceptable as an expression of public hope and of a belief things are changing for the better," Mr. Videnov said. According to him, with the present line-up of political forces, the BSP and its coalition partners are not feeling as part of a broader and stable ruling majority in parliament.

Mr. Videnov gave special attention to the BSP attitude to the present parliament. It will depend on the passage of BSP-sponsored amendments to the Land Tenure Act, the Privatization Act and new legislation, on the ending of all attempts to carry out "decommunization by law" and on the fulfillment of the cabinet's social intentions, according to him.

The BSP leader said Socialists lack "even one-hundred of the influence the president, trade unions, the Alternative Social Liberal Party expelled from the SDS, or the DPS exercise on the Lyuben Berov cabinet." He also said the cabinet has been backing down on much of what it promised as regards the land reform, privatization, the pricing and income policies, free education, power engineering and combating crime. According to Mr. Videnov, the BSP is going to "pressure the cabinet into implementing certain policies endorsed in its policy declaration." The BSP gives priority to internal and international security, the speeding up of land restitution, the updating of wages and pensions to inflation and the strengthening of the social aspects of privatization.

The socialist leader said President Zhelev had a stabilizing role in society, but stressed he is not entirely blameless as regards the course taken by the SDS after the strike of 39 radical members back in the summer of 1991. According to the report, "the SDS today is a threat to democracy, the state and society," while "the DPS is being displaced as a balancing force in parliament, of which it had been taking advantage."

On this first day, the conference is being attended by representatives of the DPS and the extra-parliamentary Bulgarian Business Party. The delegates acclaimed the announcement the ambassadors of China, Poland, Serbia and Cuba, the charge d'affaires of the Greece, Slovakia, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Russia and Mongolia and officials of the embassies of the United States and South Korea were present at the conference.

The first speeches show one can hardly expect any sensations. Questioned by STANDARD NEWS today, Svetoslav Michev of the BSP-affiliated reformist Alliance for Social Democracy (OSD) said "hard-liners have no reason to clash with the OSD." Yet personnel changes in the central leadership are probable.

Beside a resolution, the BSP will adopt a new programme document, "A Perspective For Bulgaria." Its drafting started while the Socialists were in opposition, yet changes sparked a need to use it as either an election platform or governing guidelines.

Videnov Addresses National BSP Conference

AU2703154393 Sofia Khorizont Radio Network in Bulgarian 1000 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Text] On 27 March a national conference of the Bulgarian Socialist Party [BSP] opened in Sofia. BSP Chairman Zhan Videnov read a report. Nina Spasova reports:

[Spasova] The delegates are taking the floor now. The first to speak were Nora Ananieva and Andrey Lukanov. Prior to the debate the delegates heard another report from the committee on the conference's basic document—Prospects for Bulgaria.

In his report Videnov spoke on relations between the BSP and the state institutions and political groups. The BSP attitude toward the parliament will be determined by whether the parliament implements several priority tasks, such as adopting amendments to the Laws on Privatization, Land, the Supreme Judicial Council, Local Administration, the Army, the Police, and so forth.

The Socialists' attitude toward the government will depend on whether it implements its initial intentions. In his report, Videnov said that the BSP does not have even one hundredth of the influence the trade unions, the movement for Rights and Freedoms [DPS] and the Alternative Social Liberal Party have over the government.

Videnov devoted considerable attention to the issues of political partnership. According to him, the political isolation of the Socialists ended despite the fact that due to tactical considerations the creation of a new anti-BSP coalition was possible.

Videnov did not say anything specific about new elections. He analyzed the various considerations for and against such elections.

At the end of 1992 the BSP had 380,000 members. Over 18 months its membership decreased by 100,000 members, Videnov said.

The ambassadors of China, Poland, the Republic of Serbia, and Cuba and representatives of the Russian, U.S., and other embassies are attending the conference as guests.

Conference Ends, Supports Cabinet

AU2803190093 Sofia BTA in English 1823 GMT 28 Mar 93

["Socialists Prepare To Rule, yet Give Chance To Present Cabinet"—BTA headline]

[Text] Sofia, March 28 (BTA)—The Bulgarian Socialist Party [BSP] (the former Communists) would support early parliamentary elections only in case the present parliament and cabinet fail to meet certain expectations, according to speakers at the BSP two-day National Conference which ended here today. The Socialists said they were preparing to rule after the elections.

At a national conference two weeks ago, the other major political force in this country, the Union of Democratic Forces (SDS), took a categorical stance in favour of early parliamentary elections. When these will take place, however, depends on Socialists, who are now the largest faction in parliament and whose support was decisive in electing the incumbent Lyuben Berov cabinet (on the mandate of the ethnic Turks' Movement for Rights and Freedoms) [DPS], the third force in parliament). But the Socialists today did not categorically speak for elections. They still support the present cabinet. "In case the crisis deepens and parliament proves incapable of offering a solution, parliamentary elections would be the responsible and democratic way out," according to a resolution unanimously approved by the forum.

In a statement on national radio today, BSP floor leader Nora Ananieva spoke for early, yet not "premature" elections. Addressing the conference, former Socialist leader Aleksandur Lilov, who still exerts strong influence on the party, said "the present cabinet is not of the BSP, but there will be a socialist government." He spoke for "a strong parliamentary pressure on the Berov government today and victory at the elections tomorrow." The delegates hailed Mr. Lilov's view the BSP should remain united. The former leader also discussed foreign policy issues. He believes Bulgaria's present policy is out of keeping with the realities and surprises of the 1990's and imbalanced. "Eastern and Western Europe now are not divided by military pacts, but into poor and rich," he said. Mr. Lilov was also critical of Bulgaria's Balkan policy. "It is a mistake to conduct such a violent anti-Serb campaign," he said.

In the resolution adopted by the conference, the Socialists specified on what terms they would back the Berov cabinet as well as their law-making priorities. Removing obstacles to parliament's legislative activity is seen as the major task of socialist MP's. The BSP will continue to support the cabinet if it fulfills its intentions to "guarantee national security, fight crime, corruption and attempts by Turks to assimilate ethnic Bulgarians, speed up land restitution and the economic reform, adjust wages and pensions to inflation and reach agreement with the International Monetary Fund and creditor banks."

The only text the delegates dropped from the draft resolution was one denouncing manifestations of political and social nostalgia.

Beside the resolution, the conference approved a programme document, "A Perspective For Bulgaria," intended to serve as an election programme in early elections.

Despite earlier expectations, the conference saw no bitter confrontations of BSP-affiliated movements or personnel changes in the central leadership.

DUMA Criticizes Zhelev Support for Yeltsin

AU2903081593 Sofia DUMA in Bulgarian 23 Mar 93 p 8

[Article by Petur Bochukov: "Instincts Are Incompatible With Diplomacy"]

[Text] Boris Yeltsin's decision to take Russia's government into his own hands for an approximately one month period did not draw the unanimous approval of politicians all over the world. They all support the reform that Yeltsin embodies and, from this point of view, they support him. Nevertheless, in view of Yeltsin's risky and desperate act, the assessments are more diplomatic and cautious, with some exceptions, of course. One is the Bulgarian president, who called Yeltsin's move a "formally undemocratic act, provoked by the need to halt the creeping communist restoration on the part of the old legislative institutions elected at the time of the CPSU." In other words—the end justifies the means, according to President Zhelev.

None of the statements from Western politicians contained such an assessment. First, because no serious politician would describe the parliament of a sovereign state in such a way (although it is accepted that the Russian parliament is not representative in the sense of the concept in real democracies). Second, the West is unwilling to repeat the mistake it committed in the case of former Soviet president Gorbachev.

Yeltsin's step involves numerous risks to himself, Russia, and the world. His objective may be noble, but the means of achieving it are dubious. In this connection the German paper SUEDDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG wrote: "Yeltsin is embarking upon a dangerous course that leads to an unknown destination. This should be remembered by those politicians who now wholeartedly support him. They should realize that they are linking their own policies to his fate, with all the ensuing consequences."

The Russian Constitution and Russian Parliament date back to the time when Russia was a Soviet republic. Yeltsin is convinced that they are now preventing a new beginning. However, what are the guarantees that the short, one-month dictatorship he proposes is likely to accelerate the victory of democracy? So far the power struggle has only split and totally confused the Russian people. The important question is whether the people are ready to support Yeltsin. The political inertia that affects the Russians makes this question rather doubtful.

The complicated situation and many question marks force the world politicians to be flexible and diplomatic. Unfortunately, the Bulgarian President's reaction is based rather on instinct. It would be interesting to see what the reaction would be in the event a new leader were to emerge on the crest of the wave following current developments in Russia.

Defense Minister Aleksandrov Departs for Brussels

AU2703203793 Sofia Khorizont Radio Network in Bulgarian 1700 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Text] On 27 March Defense Minister Valentin Aleksandrov departed for Brussels, where he will take part in the meeting of the defense ministers of the NATO member states and the former Warsaw Pact which begins on 29 March.

Defense Minister on Regional Situation

NC2803180393 Athens I KATHIMERINI in Greek 28 Mar 93 p 4

[Exclusive interview with Bulgarian Defense Minister Valentin Aleksandrov by Nikos Khios, I KATHIMERINI correspondent in Sofia; date not given]

[Text] [Khios] Bulgaria's political leadership has repeatedly stated that your country will not directly or indirectly participate in any international military intervention in Bosnia. It has also stated that it will not participate in a possible expansion of military clashes toward the south. Yet as the political head of the Bulgarian Army, how do you view the second possibility and what orders may you have already given?

[Aleksandrov] Indeed our positions are clear and were reaffirmed during Mitsotakis' recent visit to Sofia. Bulgaria's Armed Forces implement government policy and will not become involved in a possible military clash in the Balkans. Nevertheless, they have sufficient forces and means to defend our borders if the need arises.

I have given absolutely no orders to amass military forces or for future military operations if the war extends to the south. Indeed there is talk and there are evaluations and analyses about a possible expansion of the war, but we have no military data confirming this. As we do not wish to increase tension along the borders, we diligently avoid all kinds of troop movements on our western borders.

[Khios] What if there is a wave of refugees?

[Aleksandrov] Bulgaria will accept them in the hopes of international aid.

[Khios] You have occupied the post of defense minister for three months. Are you satisfied with the level and military readiness of your Armed Forces?

[Aleksandrov] When I took over I was more optimistic. I have encountered many problems which accumulated during the years of totalitarianism. Bulgaria was not independent but depended on the central planning of the Warsaw Pact, according to which the modernization of the Armed Forces in weapons and arms systems would have taken place during 1990-1992. However, at that time the Warsaw Pact was dissolved and we found ourselves in a very difficult position. The first problem is modernization and spare parts.

[Khios] Was it for this reason that your first visit was to Russia?

[Aleksandrov] Not only for this. We studied these issues too. Regardless of whether we call ourselves communists or anticommunists, we cannot erase our relations with Russia. In the past 40 years all our arms came from Russia, which entails a specific technological dependence. Anyone in my position would have been obliged to do the same because in military policy facts are worth more than any political leader's likes and dislikes, especially in view of the fact that a number of great Western states with very strong potential do nothing in this direction. For instance, everything that was removed from the former eastern Germany went to you and Turkey instead of being given to us.

[Khios] Have you submitted a corresponding request?

[Aleksandrov] We expressed such a request but we were refused under various pretexts. For an army to be able to fight it must be able to move. For the time being we are able to maintain the necessary military readiness but if something more serious and radical does not take place we will be reduced to a very specific, if not difficult situation in three to four years.

[Khios] According to many observers, your country is facing a "military vacuum" regarding international military-political guarantees. At the same time, you participate in the North Atlantic Council with the other Warsaw Pact countries, but your possible accession to NATO has been moved to the distant future. Where do your problems lie?

[Aleksandrov] The interest of the great powers specifically in our area is not as it was in the recent past. The military vacuum that is currently manifest must somehow be filled, and I think that this can be done only by states adjacent to the Danube on the basis of a closer rapprochement between defense ministries and their general staffs.

Obviously the new Germany is not in a position nor does it want to assume a leading role in the basin. It recognized Croatia and Slovenia, it made a great commitment to Hungary and then...that is all. [ellipsis as published] If Ukraine consolidates itself as a medium-sized power and keeps Russia away from the Danube delta, it will mean that a strong factor with international influence will be isolated. Let us not forget that Russia has played a defining role in our area since the time of Catherine the Great. This leaves France, which is far away, and naturally the United States, which has interests in the Balkans.

It should be noted that the United States greatly helped the democratic movements of eastern Europe in their struggle against communism, but currently it limits itself to truly great moral support, like the training of Bulgarian officers. However, I have received nothing for our depots. This may sound rough, but it is the way things are. Consequently, in such conditions Bulgaria can seek guarantees for its national security only by building a collective defense for states adjacent to the Danube.

[Text] [Khios] In your pondering of problems, where do you place the Balkans and how do they stand?

[Aleksandrov] I am sure that no country bordering Bulgaria will attack us. I do not expect any Serbian attacks, regardless of whether we follow what is going on there precisely. I also believe that Bulgaria's borders with Greece and Turkey are borders of peace.

However, I do not know why all the problems accumulating since 1914 have reappeared: mutual mistrust, unresolved issues, even the "Macedonian" problem. For me this problem lacks content and I am categorical on this. I know that 112,000 Bulgarian soldiers have been buried there. My two grandmothers sang how they had crossed the Vardar and left an orphan brother there. However, on the threshold of the 21st century, if we do not distance ourselves from all this sentimentality we will continue to move in a vicious circle.

If Bulgaria wants to escape from these things it should look toward the broad European horizon. You Greeks look toward the sea. Greeks think like Ulysses, while Bulgarians are confined within the mountains around them, which limit their understanding of the world. The road to Europe through the Danube is clear and without significant problems.

[Khios] Can you outline Bulgaria's defense doctrine?

[Aleksandrov] It is not yet officially formulated as a document, but from the military-political viewpoint, the following is important: Bulgaria has ceased to view Greece and Turkey as its enemies and furthermore it is not the region's advanced outpost for the Warsaw Pact. We will pass into that which is called "circular defense"; that is, our Army will spread throughout the country. This means moving troops from the borders with Turkey and Greece to the northeast and northwest, where we have almost no forces. We want to face all our neighbors the same way.

[Khios] I was impressed by a statement you made recently, which contains the following interesting element: "We here have remained completely alone near a Turkey that is constantly acquiring military and political power." Have you anything to add?

[Aleksandrov] It is merely a diagnosis. Turkey is currently the strongest state in the area militarily.

[Khios] Is there a feeling that Bulgarian-Turkish military relations have advanced more than Greek-Bulgarian relations? Is it true?

[Aleksandrov] The level of relations is precisely the same. We have signed two documents with Greece, those of Sofia and Ruppel, and two with Turkey, those of Sofia and Edirne, as supplementary to measures to consolidate trust and security resulting from international treaties. What I recently signed with my Turkish counterpart was not a self-contained document but a protocol for technological cooperation. The same can be done with Greece if we agree.

The desire of my country's political and military leadership for a balance in our relations with Greece and Turkey as a necessary prerequisite for maintaining peace in the Balkans is well known. This becomes even more necessary in view of the lack of allied guarantees for the security of small Balkan countries like Bulgaria. The signing of the above documents provides the certainty that military tension among the three countries has been significantly removed. Furthermore, there has been no confirmation of allegations that Bulgaria's position toward "Macedonia" can cloud Greek- Bulgarian relations. Awaiting the meeting with my Greek counterpart, I hope that everything positive between us will be consolidated and expanded.

Ludzhev Denounces SDS Conference Decisions

AU2403100193 Sofia TRUD in Bulgarian 18 Mar 93 p 1

[Article by Dimitur Ludzhev: "Stage of Transition Ends With 'Congress of Victors'"]

[Text] The analogy in my headline is not accidental. In 1937 the process of finally purging the All-Russian Communist Party-Bolsheviks ended with the "Congress of the Victors." The party was purged of all elements that did not accept the leadership of a certain group around Stalin....

After the conference of the Union of Democratic Forces [SDS] it appears that the SDS will turn into an organization of the apparatus type, and this is no longer a coalition. From a unique movement for democracy and free market the SDS gradually becomes an instrument of a group of people who think in an authoritarian manner of seizing all power in Bulgaria. They use methods that have nothing in common with the SDS principles and the ideas of democracy. They kindle hatred, fan passions, burn portraits, and desecrate holidays. Assault units are being used. A state of authoritarianism was reached in the SDS, and the next step will be an attempt to establish authoritarian rule in the country under the disguise of anticommunism. This danger continues to exist, and it thrives on the people's fear of restoration, and attempts to begin restoration, effected by certain postcommunist circles within the Bulgarian Socialist Party [BSP] and outside that party. The danger is also sustained by the fact that there is no alternative political force that could guarantee to the people that there will be no restoration and will protect them from the aggression of the SDS forces.

With the final turning of the SDS into an organization that threatens society with a policy of dictation, as much as the radical Reds threaten society with restoration, a stage of the Bulgarian people's transition toward democracy ended.

Now all prudent and honest people must understand the striking need of forming a new modern political force and a new union of people who understand that democracy is constructed by professionalism.

Macedonian Opposition Deputy Views Relations

AU2503160593 Sofia BTA in English 1151 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] Sofia, March 25 (BTA)—"We are quite pleased that Bulgaria was the first to recognize the independence of the Macedonian state. But I believe there are lots of things which could be done after that but were not done," says Miss Dosta Dimovska, deputy chairman of the Macedonian Internal Revolutionary Organization-Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity (IMRO-DPMNU) and Macedonian MP, in an interview which appears in today's DEMOKRATSIYA.

Miss Dimovska emphasizes that Bulgaria has established diplomatic relations, but Macedonia has not yet appointed a consul. Government-level business contacts are also sluggish and have been outstripped by private companies, she says.

Miss Dimovska wonders why Bulgaria and Macedonia do not exchange publications. "At the same time, Serbian newspapers are mass- circulated in our country," she says. In her view, the propaganda which has been going on for 50 years has left deep scars. "People are simply still afraid to communicate with Bulgaria, they assume this is taboo," Miss Dimovska says. She believes that both states should be patient until these scars are healed.

Discussing the processes in Macedonia, Miss Dimovska says that "being an opposition party, IMRO-DPMNU has serious critical remarks on the course of democratic reforms in Macedonia in all spheres of life." In her words, economic changes in Macedonia are slow because the communist "nomenklatura" would like to hold back changes and cling to power until it puts capital under complete control. "Things are very much the same in other areas, too," she emphasizes. She claims the political police still exists and a comprehensive democratization in Macedonia is out of the question.

Miss Dimovska regrets to find that all parties in Serbia take an identical view of Macedonia: They do not recognize it and lay overt territorial claims to it. "That is why we reject the so-called interim name 'Former Yugoslav Republic.' This may imply that we originated from Yugoslavia, but it can still have some rights to us," Miss Dimovska believes.

"We see the war in the former Yugoslavia as a threat to Macedonia, all the more so since we have information that many Albanians are ready to fight on the side of Albania if a conflict breaks out in Kosovo," Miss Dimovska says.

Ministers Comment on FRY Embargo, Other Issues

AU2603210493 Sofia BTA in English 1540 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] Sofia, March 26 (BTA)—As usual, it was question time today at the National Assembly.

Prime Minister Lyuben Berov was asked about the actions of his aide in connection with the enforcement of the embargo against Serbia. He pointed out that, when he ordered his aide to study the opportunities for blocking the way of the bargefuls of fuel bound for the former Yugoslavia in January, he demonstrated readiness for the observance of the embargo. Prof. Berov specified that no orders were given to block the Danube by Bulgarian barges.

Answering an MP's question, Interior Minister Viktor Mikhaylov said that the number of tourists from the CIS has been halved after a government decree introduced restrictions on the traffic of foreign citizens across the Bulgarian borders. Mr. Mikhaylov declared that his ministry is determined to cope with the crime syndicates from the CIS but lacks enough resources to do so. Mr. Mikhaylov told parliament that Russian racketeers were controlling Bulgarian businessmen as well.

Answering another question, Mr. Mikhaylov said that he did not believe that members of the fire service would endanger the state if they carry arms. More than 7,000 firearms were issued to companies and private individuals outside the Interior Ministry system last year, and the minister sees no reason why firefighters should turn in their arms.

In connection with an OTECHESTVEN VESTNIK story about the mechanism of the violation of the embargo against Serbia, which mentioned the private oil company Elpida, Interior Minister Viktor Mikhaylov provided a detailed answer about the routes of the tanker mentioned in the daily. The tanker Oltina unloaded gas oil at the port of Varna (northeastern Bulgaria, on the Black Sea), which means that the embargo was not violated.

Asked about the disbandment of the Armed Forces Inspectorate, Defence Minister Valentin Aleksandrov told parliament today that the reorganization was more than needed. He upheld his radical decision to disband the inspectorate. "If the inspectorate were an arm of the General Staff, it could have justified its existence," Mr. Aleksandrov said. He explained that after the matter was discussed at the Supreme Military Council of the Army and at the Council of the General Staff, it became clear that the inspectorate—in as much as it performs Armed Forces supervisory functions—practically duplicates the Combat Training Department.

Answering an MP's question on whether the use of alcohol in the Army is related to the increased incidence of homicide and suicide, Mr. Aleksandrov said that a special inquiry found there was no such relation. Sixteen members of the Bulgarian Army committed suicide in 1992, and alcohol was used in two of the cases, Mr. Aleksandrov said. Asked about the number of conscription dodgers, he said that 4,900 persons have failed to report to the draft boards in 1992. Of these, 3,900 are abroad, including 2,850 in Turkey, he pointed out. In his view, the remaining 1,000 or so persons subject to conscription are hiding in the territory of Bulgaria. The main reason for dodging conscription is reluctance to do one's duty to Bulgaria, Mr. Aleksandrov said.

Industry Minister Rumen Bikov said that the Okeanski Ribolov Company has 13 trawlers, which are entirely worn out and cannot be maintained efficiently. The Industry Ministry has taken action to assist the company. An opportunity to reschedule its debts is being considered. Talks are under way on the formation of joint ventures for fishing and trade with partners in Britain, Namibia, Argentina and Canada.

Next Friday parliament will hold a private sitting at which Interior Minister Viktor Mikhaylov will report on allegations of MP's' wire tapping and surveillance. The National Assembly resolved on the private sitting after Miss Verzhiniya Velcheva MP of the Union of Democratic Forces (SDS) asked Mr. Mikhaylov a question on the matter and he explained that an answer would constitute a state secret.

IMF Mission Supports Stabilization Program

AU2703161293 Sofia BTA in English 1652 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Article by Tanya Tsekova]

[Text] Sofia, March 26 (BTA)—The IMF mission will uphold the government's report before the fund's Executive Board and supports the cabinet's efforts towards structural adjustment and financial stabilization of Bulgaria, mission leader Russell Kincaid told a news conference here today. The mission paid a two-week visit to Sofia for talks with the government and is leaving tomorrow.

If the deadlines set in the Bulgarian Government's letter of intent are met, at its May session the IMF may consider a further one-year stand-by arrangement with Bulgaria, Finance Minister Stoyan Aleksandrov assumes. The mission was briefed on the economic condition of the country and on the differences between reality and the second SBA [standby arrangement] with the IMF, which expired at the end of February.

The government supports all demands raised by the mission and will bring them to the attention of parliament, as most of them concern legislation, Mr. Aleksandrov said. A 1993 National Budget Act and a Value Added Tax Act must be passed before the end of April. The IMF insists on a VAT a flat rate of 20 percent on all goods. A Bankruptcy Act must be passed along with rules for the writing-off of enterprises' bad debts, with the proviso that this will be the last operation of this kind, after which the Bankruptcy Act will take effect. The IMF also insists on the publication of the bank supervision regulations and on speedy privatization. The Bulgarian finance minister said the government is ready to fulfil this programme but much depends on parliament's law-making performance.

The exact budget deficit figure is subject to further agreement, Mr. Kincaid said. The Bulgarian Government insists on a 27,000 million leva deficit, which is some 8 percent of the gross domestic product, Finance Minister Aleksandrov said, stressing that he would not sign an unfulfillable agreement with the IMF. In his view, the revenue side might be revised and the percentage of spending reduced. According to Mr. Kincaid, the mission was understanding of the amount of spending, all the more so since the possible arrangement would be one-year and, if signed in June, would cover half of this and half of next year. For the time being, it is impossible to predict what amount the IMF would allocate Bulgaria if a third arrangement is signed, Mr. Kincaid said.

Bulgaria joined the IMF in September 1990. The second one-year stand-by arrangement, which expired in February 1993, amounted to 212 million dollars. The first SBA totalled 365 million dollars.

World Bank To Make Water Project Loan

AU2603155393 Sofia BTA in English 1446 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] Sofia, March 26 (BTA)—A water supply, sewerage and water treatment project will be financed by the largest loan which the World Bank has offered Bulgaria so far, Mr. John Wilton, resident representative of the World Bank to Bulgaria, told a news conference today. He and his colleague, Mr. Robert van Puli, said they were pleased with the three weeks of talks they had held here on the project. Its final assessment will be given when the World Bank mission pays its next visit to Bulgaria in mid-June. Mr. van Puli believes that the implementation of the project will start next year at the latest.

Familiarizing reporters with the project, Deputy Minister of Regional Development and Construction Kolyo Kraevski said that the investment will go into key areas of the water sector and into adjusting the water companies to efficient operation. The overall amount of the loan is planned at 100 million U.S. dollars.

The largest amount, some 38 million dollars, will be spent on a programme to cut water losses, 22.7 million dollars will be used for identification of water supply projects, and 12.3 million for the construction of urban water treatment facilities. Some 5 percent of the money will be allocated for technical assistance, streamlined management and personnel training. The rest will be shared between competing projects submitted by the water companies.

Under the project, the state water supply companies will be transformed into corporations involving the state and the municipalities.

According to Mr. Kraevski, this loan will have a considerable macroeconomic, social and environmental effect. It will help create new jobs, reduce the amount of uncompleted construction in the water sector, boost private business, and draw foreign investors to the secured market.

The loan will have to be repaid in 17 years. Water prices will have to be raised 15-20 percent on the average to service the loan, Mr. Kraevski said.

Following the telecommunications and electricity supply loan, this is the third World Bank loan to a definite sector of the Bulgarian economy, Mr. Wilton said. Asked when Bulgaria will get the second tranche of the structural adjustment loan, which has been postponed for a year now, Mr. Wilton said that if political life in Bulgaria does not develop smoothly, the World Bank will stress tied loans.

Finance Minister Discusses Corruption

AU2703155693 Sofia BTA in English 1729 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] Sofia, March 26 (BTA)—"It is an open secret that there is corruption in the financial sector: the ministry, the customs service, the tax administration. I for one am convinced that there is corruption," Finance Minister Stoyan Aleksandrov said in parliament today, answering a question from Mr. Velko Vulkanov MP of the BSP [Bulgarian Socialist Party]. Mr. Aleksandrov said, however, that no case of corruption has been proved so far, even though several cases have been referred to the judiciary and the prosecuting authorities. Detecting corruption is further impeded by the large number of people (some 10,000) working within the system of the Finance Ministry, the Customs Service and the tax administration.

Mr. Aleksandrov believes that corruption in the financial sector can take various forms. In the most alarming cases, letters from the Finance Ministry or from its units exempted individual companies or persons from taxes and customs duties. It is difficult to blame public servants in all cases, as a number of faked signatures and seals have been found. Similar problems blocked the detection of corruption in the customs service: An investigation found that two in five customs declarations are faked. The Finance Ministry approached specialized police branches for assistance to detect the fakes, but they did not always succeed because the original documents were sometimes unavailable.

Mr. Aleksandrov said a Public Servants Act is a must, as it would clearly disqualify public servants from forming private companies. It's child's play for a couple of customs officers to set up an import-export company, Mr. Aleksandrov said, adding that the effective legislation did not give jurists categorical grounds to rule that this was against the law, which opened yet another loophole for corruption. The preferential treatment of companies and foundations and tax and customs duty exemption is not entirely regulated in legislation, and quite often they benefit from the vague regulation.

The finance minister told parliament that he was ready to take drastic, even though unpopular measures to crack down on corruption "because the octopus is very powerful." Twenty members of the customs service and six employees of the tax administration have been dismissed for breach of discipline. Investigations are under way to find out whether the dismissed employees were really corrupt or merely incompetent. He said he was determined to keep dismissing people for such violations and to launch restructuring so as to secure a double control and make corruption impossible.

Winding up his answer, Mr. Aleksandrov confirmed recent press reports that his ministry paid fees to ex-Justice Minister Svetoslav Luchnikov and to a Sofia-based lawyer, who represented the state in various cases. Mr. Aleksandrov however denied that the two lawyers had received astronomic amounts, saying that the payment was consistent with the rates for legal services.

After hearing the finance minister's answer, Mr. Velko Vulkanov MP voiced a protest against the "inaction of the law enforcement authorities and above all of the Prosecutor General's Office," which blocked the fight against corruption. Mr. Vulkanov moved that parliament hold a special sitting to hear other ministers on the cases of corruption, but no resolution was adopted because the sitting ran out of time.

Germany Extends Credit for Agricultural Equipment

AU2803202393 Sofia BTA in English 1924 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Text] Sofia, March 27 (BTA)—The Hermes programme of the German Government opened a 100 million mark credit line to aid Bulgarian farming. Between 10 and 15 million marks have been transferred to the Central Bulgarian National Bank, Agricultural Minister Georgi Tanev said upon his return from Germany today. The credit line gives Bulgarian farmers a chance to buy German farming equipment, he said.

Mr. Tanev, who was invited by the German firm Seidelman, met with officials of the German Economy Ministry, with the president of the German Farmers' Union and private farmers.

Nuclear Safety Agreement Signed With Germany

AU2603145093 Sofia BTA in English 1250 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] Sofia, March 26 (BTA)—A Bulgarian-German agreement on nuclear safety and radiation protection was signed here today in compliance with the principles for cooperation within the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Vienna Convention for Operative Notification in Case of Nuclear Accidents.

Klaus Gast, chief of the Nuclear Safety Department with the Ministry of the Environment, signed for Germany. Yanko Yanev, chairman of the Committee for Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy, signed for Bulgaria.

Mr. Yanev stressed this is the first bilateral agreement with an East European country to include a clause under which the German Ministry will provide technical assistance and information on nuclear safety matters.

Mr. Gast, who has visited the Kozloduy Nuclear Power Plant, said he was satisfied with its equipment, but declined to comment whether it still is the world's most dangerous nuclear power plant as it had been described by West European newspapers until recently.

Decommissioning Process for Kozloduy Discussed

AU2603203593 Sofia POGLED in Bulgarian No. 12, 22 Mar 93 p 16

[Article by Boryana Kuncheva: "Kozloduy Nuclear Plant Has About 10 Years of Life Left"]

[Text] When a nuclear power plant is designed, the engineers determine the duration of its service life, which is usually between 25 and 30 years. The Kozloduy Nuclear Power Plant is already 19 years old, so that in theory at least it is approaching its "critical point." What will happen then?

U.S. scientists were the first to prove that a nuclear plant can operate as long as 40 years. This depends most of all on the structure of the metal used in its construction, which changes over the years. What is the state of the metal used to build the Kozloduy plant?

An inspection carried out last year established that the metal had not suffered fatigue and could remain serviceable for at least another 30 years. This almost corresponds to the financial situation at the moment. According to Nikolay Shervashidze, director of Energoproekt, the service life of power plants is also determined on the basis of "economic considerations." The Americans, for example, decided to close down some of their power plants because they estimated that the cost of maintaining them was higher than the dividends obtained from sales of the electric power produced.

For the time being, economic considerations prevail in Bulgaria as well but with the opposite effect. According to Shervashidze, "if we decide to close down the Nos. 1 and 2 reactors at Kozloduy in 1996 (when they will have completed 22 years of service—editor's note), this will cost us $20 million in investment and at least $220 million to maintain them in a safe condition until the end of the century." For only two reactor units, the cost is $220 million! According to international practice, the owners of nuclear power plants save this money in bank accounts and always have it available as "cash in hand." This is not the case in Bulgaria....

Today no one can say with certainty when we will begin to collect the money to bury our nuclear power plant. This is what the specialists call the process, which is not completed in a single operation. Everything remains as it was, except that no electricity is produced.

Usually the reactors are not destroyed, because this would cost too much money. Dismantling them would also be dangerous and would expose the workers involved to high levels of irradiation.

Therefore, special equipment is usually designed to supply steam to the power plant. After 20 or 30 years, the radioactivity gradually falls to acceptable levels, and then the power plant is buried by encasing it in concrete.

The significant point is that money is needed to carry out this work, and money is what we do not have, at least for the time being.

Berov Chairs Meeting on Energy Supply Issues

AU2803202293 Sofia BTA in English 1947 GMT 27 Mar 93

["Today"—BTA lead]

[Excerpts] Sofia, March 27 (BTA)—Prime Minister Lyuben Berov chaired a meeting on power engineering with Deputy Prime Minister Neycho Neev, acting chairman of the Power Engineering Committee, deputy chairmen of the Power Engineering Committee Nikita Shevardshidze, Lazar Petkanchin and Evgeni Angelov and the chairman of the Committee on Peaceful Atomic Energy Uses Yanko Yanev. The officials discussed urgent financial and organizational problems of the sector, the Power Engineering Committee Press Office reports. The prime minister will chair such briefings twice a month. [passage omitted]

The leader of the Union of Democratic Forces (SDS) Filip Dimitrov and SDS MP's visited Chirpan, southern Bulgaria. At a meeting with sympathizers, Mr. Dimitrov said elections will take place by the year's end.

A Constitutional Forum Federation of Student Clubs was held here. According to the statutes, the new organization is voluntary and independent and aims to defend students' academic, cultural and social rights and revive national values among the academic community.

Bulgarian publishers and authors of Christian books met here today. The forum was sponsored by the Publishing House of the Holy Synod, the New Life Adventist Publishers and the Veren (true) Publishers of Christian literature. Representatives of 26 publishing houses nationwide took part. We discussed opportunities to promote healthy Christian spirit and counter publications by various sects and pulp literature flooding the Bulgarian market, publisher Zdravko Nenov told BTA. [passage omitted]

At a meeting today, the leadership of the SDS-affiliated United Christian Democratic Centre scheduled a national forum in Plovdiv, southern Bulgaria for early May. The date will be set by one week. The delegates will discuss the party's role in the coalition and the resignation of its leader, former Foreign Minister Stoyan Ganev.

Defense Minister Baudys Views Regional Issues

AU2603122093 Budapest PESTI HIRLAP in Hungarian 24 Mar 93 p 9

[Interview with Defense Minister Antonin Baudys by Geza Mucsi; place and date not given: "Antonin Baudys on Czech-Hungarian Military Cooperation"]

[Text] [Mucsi] As the defense minister of the Czech Republic, what are your views on European security in these warlike times?

[Baudys] We have to pay a little more attention to the situation than in the past. A war is raging in the area of Yugoslavia, and the situation that has emerged in the former Soviet Union can also considerably change Europe's stability—not only Europe's, naturally. I am very happy that we managed to come to an understanding with [Hungarian Defense Minister] Lajos Fur and that neither of us is giving up on peace in Europe. We are also doing everything to prevent existing conflicts from spreading. I have to add to this that since the separation of our federal state, the Czech Republic is a few hundred kilometers further to the west. As a result, we do not have direct contact with the countries of the former Soviet Union anymore. In other words, we do not have a common border. I would be happy if the defense ministers of the Visegrad group [Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Poland] held very similar, if not identical, views.

[Mucsi] Can you see an actual threat on the side of the former Yugoslavia, in other words, Serbia? More precisely, have the Hungarian minorities of the neighboring countries been put into greater danger?

[Baudys] From our point of view, there is no immediate danger at the moment. As for Hungary and the Hungarians, we do not yet have enough information, but we can still perceive how complicated the situation of the Hungarians is. The Czech Government has already emphasized the principles of citizenship and the full observance of national minority rights at the same time.

[Mucsi] What are your views on the cooperation of the Visegrad countries?

[Baudys] Our views are close to the Hungarian and Polish views, in the sense that we have to work together but this does not need to be institutionalized. We inherited similar armies, command structures, and almost identical military technology and equipment from the Warsaw Pact, and we are struggling with almost identical problems. For this reason, we frequently have to exchange our experiences and coordinate our steps.

[Mucsi] Have the problems arising from the Czech and Slovak separation been resolved yet?

[Baudys] Formally, the separation has been completed. The problems have been solved. Now we only have to exchange material resources. Half of this is already in Slovakia. As a matter of fact, all kinds of cooperation agreements are waiting to be signed now. We do not have disputed issues. This is a big result of the separation of the federal state. It also shows maximum goodwill.

[Mucsi] However, the separation of the staff may still cause problems. How is, for example, the Czech Army being organized in this respect? Has organization on a national basis been brought into the foreground?

[Baudys] Until 30 March, everyone can freely decide on their future citizenship. This means that the officers, soldiers, and families who want to remain in the Czech Republic can freely do so, and it is not a problem, either, if someone wants to serve in Slovakia. Both sides have committed themselves to this and it also provides the best opportunity for the exchange of personnel.

Ministers Discuss Agriculture Regulation

LD2603202593 Prague Stanice Praha Radio Network in Czech 1730 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Excerpts] Correspondent Miroslav Dittrich reports on the results of today's meeting of economic ministers of the Czech Government:

[Dittrich] The ministers agreed that the extent of subsidies and of the protection of our market needs to be gradually decreased in the context of worldwide developments. They envision regulation of the agricultural commodities market to take the form of a functioning fund for market regulation.

[Agriculture] Minister Josef Lux proposed at the meeting the creation of a system of commodity councils that would conclude commodity contracts for every year in advance so that farmers would know, at least in rough outlines, what volume of a particular product—for example, wheat, pork, eggs, milk, sugar etc.—they would be able to sell next year.

Agriculture Minister Josef Lux and Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus differed in their opinion on this matter. Vaclav Klaus told journalists after the meeting that he is in favor of negotiations on commodities for a particular year between the parties involved but he opposes the idea of any institution being created for this activity. Minister Lux said in response that the world around us firmly controls the market and even if we do not want to imitate others he still proposes the commodity contracts. At the same time he emphasised that he does not want to opt for quotes, which is a relatively detailed contractual system for agricultural production used extensively, for example in Austria. [passage omitted]

However, there was agreement among the economic ministers on the establishment of a contingency fund for development in agriculture that would bring together state subsidies and 20-30 percent shares participation by the processing and food industries.

Ministers intend to discuss key measures in agriculture with representatives of various groups from agriculture on 5 April.

Zieleniec on Prospects for Czech-Russian Treaty

LD2603215193 Prague CTK in English 2043 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow March 26 (CTK correspondent)—Czech Foreign Minister Josef Zieleniec expressed the conviction today that a Russian-Czech inter-state treaty might be completed by the end of this year.

Speaking at a press conference at the close of his one-day official visit to Moscow, Zieleniec said this issue was one of the chief points discussed during his meeting with Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev. Groups of experts from the two countries will launch talks on the treaty as soon as possible, Zieleniec said.

He did not specify how the future Russian-Czech treaty is to differ from the one signed by the former Czechoslovakia and Russia in April 1992 but never ratified due to Czechoslovakia's split into two independent republics at the end of the year.

Zieleniec said that the language of the 1992 treaty was too much affected by the past forty years (of communist rule), and that also the parties to the treaty are now different.

The relationship between the Czech Republic and Russia represents a constant in the Czech foreign policy, Zieleniec said, adding that Russia is a very important state and contacts with it are important for the Czech Republic not only for economic reasons.

Zieleniec handed to Kozyrev a letter from Czech President Vaclav Havel addressed to Russian President Boris Yeltsin and expressing support to Russian reforms.

It is immensely important that Russia develop towards stable democracy and effective economy based on private ownership, Zieleniec said when speaking of the current constitutional crisis in the country.

Zieleniec also met today with Arkadiy Volskiy, chairman of the influential Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs and one of the leaders of the centrist bloc Civic Union. It is important for the Czech-Russian relations to learn about different views of the current developments in Russia, Zieleniec said.

Zieleniec did not meet with Russian Vice-Premier Aleksandr Shokhin to discuss economic problems, particularly Russian debts against Czech enterprises as originally planned. The meeting was cancelled at the last moment because all members of the Russian cabinet attended today's extraordinary session of the Congress of People's Deputies.

Zieleniec said the problem of Russian debts will soon be discussed in Moscow by Czech Minister of Industry and Trade Vladimir Dlouhy. It is a very positive signal that the Russians are ready for such a debate, Zieleniec said.

After the press conference Zieleniec ended his visit and left for home.

Havel Believes Yeltsin's Reforms Will Succeed

LD2803162093 Prague CTK in English 1524 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] Prague March 28 (CTK)—Czech President Vaclav Havel believes the reform line of development represented by Russian President Boris Yeltsin will be pushed through in Russia and a democratic system will be built there.

In his regular Sunday radio programme, Havel described Yeltsin's reforms as the only possible way for Russia to follow in the future.

In his opinion, the latest dramatic events in Russia were an attempt to restore the old times, but also part of a process of seeking a balance between the legislative, executive and judicial powers there.

Commenting on Prague's problems, Havel said he is a friend of the market economy, but at the same time I realise market economy can cause great damage to a city and spoil it. All the basic functions of the city - housing, offices and services - ought to be linked together in Prague, and its centre should remain a vital organism. Big banks should not be located in central Prague because, he said, after working hours the city will be dead.

Government Will Not Meet Sudeten Germans

AU2703154493 Prague RUDE PRAVO in Czech 23 Mar 93 pp 1, 2

[Robert Dengler and Vladimir Plesnik report: "Klaus Told Streibl: 'The Czech Government Will Not Yield to Sudeten Germans'"]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] A Czech political party could be a participant in possible talks with the Sudeten Germans, but in no case would this be the government. This is what ensued from an interview with [Prime Minister] Vaclav Klaus on Monday evening [22 March] for RUDE PRAVO, LIDOVA DEMOKRACIE, and Radio Free Europe. "My problem is, who should it be? The idea that five city mayors from the border region would meet and clear relations with the Sudeten Germans is absurd. On the other hand, it is out of the question that this would be the Czech Government. I must confess that I am looking for a solution. Maybe, if one of the smaller political parties would be willing to do this, it would be interpreted as their [Sudeten Germans] dealing with a politician from our country who does not have direct relations with the government," he said.

According to what he said, Klaus has no confidence in any sort of foundation or fund that could provide compensation to both sides. As he put it: This is not the way we should proceed. "I believe that certain methods have been outpaced by history, and I do not see a possibility of our returning to these methods in any positive way," he said.

When asked by RUDE PRAVO whether he saw any significance in the fact that the subject has been tabled during official talks, Klaus said: "It is absolutely clear that the problem of the Sudeten Germans exists only on the German side, not on the Czech side. It is quite obvious that it is always the German side that raises this question when we are talking with them. There has been no change in that respect, then. Every German politician whom I have met since 17 November 1989 asked this question."

According to [Bavarian Prime Minister] Streibl, both sides agree that the best thing is to discuss the matter, especially as the Sudeten Germans and the Czech Republic's citizens have close contacts. "We agreed on the fact that it is better to speak than to fight or apply violence. We are of the opinion that demands that cannot be met today will be easier to discuss later, when the Czech Republic joins the EC," the Bavarian prime minister said. He also said that he does not want the Sudeten German demands to become a stumbling block for the Czech Republic, which has to deal with the difficult situation in Slovakia.

When asked whether both sides agreed upon roundtable discussions on the Sudeten Germans, Klaus said no. [passage omitted]

Havel on Sudeten Germans Issue

LD2903124093 Prague Radiozurnal Radio Network in Czech 1100 GMT 29 Mar 93

[Text] [Announcer] We are building a new democratic and law-abiding state; we are building a civic society. This state cannot be based on fallacy, lies, or prejudice, or these will catch up with us in a tragic way. This is what Czech President Vaclav Havel said in his statement at today's news conference. Eva Hulkova attended on behalf of Radiozurnal:

[Hulkova] The statement concerned the transfer of Sudeten Germans. Vaclav Havel went on to say in his statement:

I am concerned about how healthy our self-awareness is. It should include the ability to face our own past. A forceful transfer of millions of people based purely on an ethnic principle—which means the principle of collective blame—is a morally flawed act. To condone it amounts to an indirect approval of the forceful expulsion of Jews, Tartars, Lithuanians, and other nations from their homes. It amounts to approving of ethnic cleansing in Bosnia.

Civic society cannot be built on the approval of such dangerous, nationalistic behavior. By the same token, self-awareness of a nation can be no more built on forged manuscripts than on national prejudice of any kind. We are no worse than anybody else, but neither are we any better.

In my view it is the duty of the president to point out these unpopular issues, Vaclav Havel said in his statement today, among other things.

About tomorrow's visit by Slovak President Michal Kovac, Havel said that he saw its main purpose as establishing friendly relations with Slovakia. He said, though, that he did not intend to avoid contentious issues. The president will be conveying the government's views and not offering solutions.

Tosovsky Supports Halting Transfer of Slovak Shares

AU2903144693 Prague CTK in English 1309 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] Prague March 26 (CTK)—The Slovak investors shares in the coupon privatization are the only guarantee of Slovakia's payment of its debt resulting from the division of the former Czechoslovakia's property, Governor of the Czech National Bank (CNB), Josef Tosovsky, said in todays daily LIDOVE NOVINY.

Tosovsky approves the controversial Czech Government decision on March 17 not to hand over the coupon privatization shares to the Slovak holders unless a comprehensive agreement between the Czech Republic and Slovakia on the settlement of federal property is signed.

Slovakia's debt arising from the division of the former Czechoslovak State Bank balance alone is worth 24.7 billion korunas ($800 million).

The decision has been criticized by the Slovak Government and also by some Czech opposition parties as breaking the credibility of the Czech Government towards potential investors.

Tosovsky says that the Czech Republic's credibility is on the rise. This is evidenced by the increased assessment by the Moody rating company.

The foreign currency reserves have been steadily increasing since the beginning of 1993, reaching $3,726.3 million in the whole banking sector, says Tosovsky.

According to him, the post communist countries are less trusted by Western economic circles than the weaker EC countries, such as Greece and Portugal, in spite of the fact that the Czech Republic's economy displays better economic indicators, such as the per capita GNP, exports, the trade balance, inflation, and the budget deficit.

Tosovsky says that this years GDP increase will be between zero to three percent. No variant suggests a GDP decline.

The CNB estimates this years inflation at 15 percent. As the January price hike was greater than expected—almost 10 percent—the CNB's estimation may prove unrealistic. The 15 percent figure can come true if the inflation does not exceed 0.5 percent per month and if the government does not unexpectedly increase some subsidized products, said Tosovsky.

The wide span of economic forecasts is due to the uncertain prospect of trade with Slovakia, says Tosovsky, adding that the CNB has expected a 30 percent decline.

Due to the large surplus in trade with Slovakia, the Czech Republic has revalued by 2 percent the clearing currency in bilateral relations, while Slovakia devalued by 5 percent. If the trend in mutual trade continues, the Czech Republic will revalue its clearing currency again, says Tosovsky.

Tosovsky also says that the import surcharge imposed by Slovakia on goods from third countries (not relating to the Czech Republic) might cause a re-export through the Czech Republic.

Parliament Passes Resolution on Migration

AU2603153393 Prague CTK in English 1117 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] Prague March 24 (CTK)—The Czech Parliament Chamber of Deputies today asked the government to present to it once in six months a report on the state of migration and related problems.

In a resolution passed at its 7th session, the Chamber asked the government to submit its first report to it by the end of August.

The Chamber's Committee for Petitions, Human Rights and Nationalities, which is a guarantor for the problem, should be presented government reports every three months.

The parliamentarians also asked the government to draft a long-term scenario of legislative measures to tackle all forms of migration and to submit it to it by the end of June.

The resolution says that legislation must be observed in the implementation of government measures on migration and its violation by any group of the population, state administration bodies and local governments must be punished.

Over the past months, the Czech Republic has been facing problems related mainly to Romanies of whom some 200,000 live on its territory.

Their specific way of life has led some towns, especially in North Bohemia, to adopt decrees on Romanies which have been called discriminatory by the Romanies as well as by some public officials. The same is true of a proposal to solve the Romany problem presented in February by Czech Prosecutor General Jiri Setina.

Moreover, the Romanies have been the target of skinhead attacks. This has led them in February to ask the Czech Government to take measures to prevent any expressions of racism and fascism from the Czech Republic. The government has responded that it is up to the Parliament and local bodies to see to deal with the problem.

Another migration problem arises from Germany's planned amendment to asylum legislation. Under it refugees from southeast Europe, the former Soviet Union and other Asian countries are to be returned across the border to the transit countries—the Czech Republic and Poland. Ways of ensuring the refugees' return from the two countries to their countries of origin are now being sought.

To Investigate Communist Repression

AU2603153593 Prague CTK in English 1917 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] Prague March 24 (CTK)—The Czech Parliament today approved the status and order of procedure of a commission to investigate repressive actions codenamed Norbert, Zasah, Vlna and other similar measures directed against opponents of the former communist regime.

Norbert, approved in 1964, envisioned internment by the State Security (StB) of members of opposition groups and other persons opposed to the communist regime according to prepared lists. Zasah concerned a planned action by the army in November 1989, at the time of anti-communist demonstrations. Vlna envisioned replacement of radio and television journalists who would refuse to cooperate with the regime in November 1989 by those loyal to it.

Under the approved order of procedure, the commission is an independent investigatory organ of the Chamber of Deputies. It will cooperate with the General Prosecutor's Office, the Defense and Interior Ministries and other institutions.

The deputies elected 11 of the 13 commission members, the two remaining will be elected Thursday [25 March].

The parliamentary commission was set up February 24.

[Prague HOSPODARSKE NOVINY in Czech on 25 March on page 2 carries a 700-word "ha, pra"-signed report on the 24 March meeting of the Chamber of Deputies, which includes the following additional passage: "The Chamber of Deputies yesterday did not accept the report of the Czech Republic Council for Radio and Television Broadcasting, which assessed the Council's own activity as well as the operation of state-run information media. The Council must submit to Parliament a new report, in which it is to explain the motives that made it award individual licenses for television and radio broadcasting. The nonapproval of the report is generally regarded as a step pointing to the dismissal of the current members of the Council."]

Bill on Establishing Moravian Land Rejected

AU2603141293 Prague CTK in English 2014 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] Prague March 24 (CTK)—The Czech Government today rejected a bill providing for the establishment of a Moravian-Silesian Land within the Czech Republic as proposed by a group of Czech parliament deputies.

At its regular session in Prague headed by Premier Vaclav Klaus, the government voiced several objections to the bill, saying it neither clearly defines the territorial boundaries of the proposed independent entity nor does it say anything about its administrative bodies, their powers and relationship to the state organs of the Czech Republic.

In other business, the government discussed draft principles of an amendment to the Czech Republic's Constitution providing for the abolition of its clause envisaging the establishment of the Senate, the upper house in the Czech parliament.

The government did not recommend the amendment's approval, arguing that its implementation would require the amending of more than a half of the Constitution's articles. The government said it seemed an inappropriate interference in the Constitution, given its importance as a basic legal act and its recent adoption.

State Subsidy To Be Paid to Political Parties

AU2603165693 Prague CTK in English 1042 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] Prague March 24 (CTK)—Czech Finance Minister Ivan Kocarnik is to pay a total of 45 million crowns (1.5 million USD) to the political parties for the results which they achieved in the last federal parliament elections in June 1992, the Czech daily RUDE PRAVO writes today.

The federal parliament ceased to exist on January 1, 1993, as of the Czechoslovak Federation's split into two independent republics.

The amount is to be earmarked from the Czech state budget, the paper writes. In the parliament budgetary committee, which recommended to Kocarnik to take this step on Tuesday, the deputies from the government coalition have a majority, RUDE PRAVO adds.

The Civic Democratic Party (ODS), which had 76 seats in the 300-seat federal parliament, will thus get almost 14.5 million crowns (480,000 USD), its election coalition partner, the Christian Democratic Party (KDS) nearly 2 million crowns (66,000 USD) for winning 9 seats. The opposition Left Bloc (LB) is to get 7 million crowns (230,000 USD) for 34 seats, the opposition Czech (former Czechoslovak) Social Democratic Party (CSSD), which gained 16 seats, will be given 3.5 million crowns (110,000 USD), the Assembly for the Republic-Czechoslovak Republican Party (SPR-RSC) will get over 3.1 million crowns (100,000 USD) for gaining 14 seats in the parliament's two chambers, RUDE PRAVO reports.

The coalition Christian Democratic Union-Czechoslovak People's Party (KDU-CSL) and the opposition Liberal Social Union (LSU) are following with 3 million crowns (almost 100,000 USD) each for 13 parliament seats and 2.8 million crowns (95,000 USD) for 12 seats respectively, the daily writes.

Under the law on political parties, the non-parliament parties, which gained more than 2 percent of the votes in the last June federal parliament elections, will also obtain the state subsidy, according to the election results, RUDE PRAVO writes. The volume of 2.2 million crowns (over 70,000 USD) will be given to each the Civic Movement (OH), the Civic Democratic Alliance (ODA) and the Self-Government Democracy Movement for Moravia and Silesia (HSDMS). Though represented in the Czech Parliament, the latter two parties had no seats in the former Czechoslovak supreme legislative body.

CSSD Alleges Parties Used Communist Money

AU2603171793 Prague CTK in English 1601 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] Prague March 24 (CTK)—We will hound the government if it is discovered that former Communist Party (KSC) property has not been returned to the people but used to finance election campaigns of the parties with distinctly anticommunist programs, Milos Zeman, leader of Czech Social Democrats, said today.

Speaking at a press conference in Olomouc, North Moravia, the chairman of the Czech Social Democratic Party (CSSD) thus confirmed the statement about his intention to hound the government which he made in late February, upon his election as CSSD chairman. Zeman added that the CSSD has started collecting facts to prove or disprove this hypothesis.

According to Zeman, with today's visit to Olomouc he is starting a series of public meetings at which, he said, we will not say that the government is incompetent, though we think so, but acquaint citizens with a positive program on how the current economic crisis should be solved. Zeman thus characterized the current situation in the Czech Republic in which, he noted, with diminishing manufacturing output overemployment is still being maintained, enterprises are spending their basic assets, almost not investing, while the passage of a bankruptcy law is still being postponed.

KDS Deputies Rebel Against Party Chairman

AU2603171893 Prague CTK in English 1905 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] Prague March 24 (CTK)—Part of the Czech Parliament deputies from the Christian Democratic Party (KDS) want to express their lack of confidence in the party chairman, Vaclav Benda, KDS deputy Michal Lobkowicz told CTK today.

He added that the deputies intend to suggest calling an extraordinary congress of the party which would take place by this summer.

Some KDS deputies are opposed to Benda's excessive political ambitions, recalling that he has been gradually seeking the posts of Senate chairman, deputy premier, director of the Security and Information Service (BIS) and also of the general inspector of the Czech Army.

According to Lobkowicz, all this is politicking. We must free ourselves from lobbyist methods in politics, he said.

The proposal to convene an extraordinary congress of the KDS was supported by the deputy chairman of the Chamber of Deputies, Pavel Tollner (KDS), who characterized the situation in the party as serious.

Earlier in the day, Benda told journalists that an extraordinary party congress is demanded by only about five people within the KDS who have not much hope of pushing through their idea.

Benda also said he was not worried by the latest results of public opinion polls showing that the number of KDS supporters is decreasing.

The KDS, which for the June 1992 elections ran in coalition with the Civic Democratic Party (ODS) of Premier Vaclav Klaus, holds 10 seats in the 200-strong Chamber of Deputies, although it has only about 2,000 members and polls give it less than one-percent support among the population.

[Prague CESKY DENIK in Czech on 25 March on page 1 carries a 500-word interview with KDS deputy Tomas Svoboda by CESKY DENIK reporter Michal Musil. In the interview, the place and date of which are not given, Svoboda says that the KDS "would deserve a better chairman than Vaclav Benda," whom he blames for the party's poor image among the public. Svoboda suggests that "Ivan Pilip, Michal Lobkowicz, or Pavel Tollner" would make "better representatives of the party."

Social Democrats, Liberals Agree To Form Bloc

LD2603211593 Prague Radiozurnal Radio Network in Czech 1900 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] Close cooperation between the Czech Social Democratic Party and the Liberal Social Union [LSU] to prepare the groundwork for the establishment of a noncommunist opposition group based on the idea of a realistic bloc, was agreed to by the respective party chairmen, Milos Zeman and Frantisek Trnka, in Prague today.

LSU spokesman Ales Vebr said that the realistic bloc should be a loose coalition group of democratic opposition parties. According to Ales Vebr, the representatives of both parties agreed to set up teams of experts that would shadow the structure of the Czech Government. LSU Deputy Chairman Ladislav Dvorak said that the main task of the teams of experts should be the drafting of a complex alternative to the transformation of society.

Charter 77 Members Ask Havel To Step Down

LD2703230493 Prague Stanice Praha Radio Network in Czech 2130 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Text] Signatories of Charter 77 who disagree with the recent decision to wind up its activity met in Prague today. Some 100 people of the 1,600 invited took part in the meeting. Those present decided that the Charter will register as an organization at the Czech Ministry of Interior. It intends to publicly voice opinion on social events, to monitor the activity of all elements of society, and to point out cases of injustice, immoral action, and misuse of power.

(Antonin Belohoubek), (Zbynek Cerovsky), John Bok, Petr Cibulka, (Lubos Vydra), and (Pavel Neumann) were among those elected members of the Charter's coordination council.

Participants in the meeting expressed their unequivocal disagreement with Vaclav Havel being Czech president and passed a resolution appealing to him to step down from this office.

Manufacturing Prices Continue To Increase

AU2603132693 Prague HOSPODARSKE NOVINY in Czech 23 Mar 93 p 8

[Report by Czech Statistical Office, Department of Price Statistics and Foreign Trade: "The Price Rise Continued in February"]

[Text] Manufacturing prices continued to increase in February but at a slower rate than in January.

The most substantial increase was observed in February (compared with January) by industrial manufacturers (3.4 percent) and in the price of drinking water (4.2 percent). Less striking was the increase in the price of construction work (1.7 percent), material and products used in construction (2.4 percent), and sewage water (0.5 percent).

Over the first two months of this year (compared with December 1992), water prices rose fastest (drinking water—11 percent; sewage water—9.7 percent), followed by material and products used in construction (9.5 percent), construction work (8.6 percent), and industrial manufacturers' prices (7.3 percent).

In addition to the effect of the increasing prices of input materials, in February in many instances the increased prices also reflected the consumer tax, which applies particularly to tobacco products.

The overall price level of agricultural manufacturers' prices rose by 4.1 percent in February compared with the same period the previous year. While the prices of animal products only edged up 2.4 percent, vegetable products soared 20.1 percent. Since they only accounted for a marginal share in this period, they did not substantially affect the overall price level.

In the manufacturing sphere the price increase expressed as a sliding average for the past 12 months compared with the previous 12 months moved between 9 and 10 percent, except it was lower for agricultural manufacturers (7 percent) and higher for water prices (over 70 percent).

Reported Surplus Due to Moderate Expenditures

AU2903150793 Prague CTK in English 1137 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] Prague March 23 (CTK)— The state budget of the Czech Republic has been showing a consistent surplus, beginning February 11, the Czech daily MLADA FRONTA DNES reports today.

The daily voices the view that the budget surplus, which in mid-March amounted to 4.2 billion crowns (approximately 140 million USD), is not, however, a result of increasing budgetary incomes, but rather a policy of moderate and well-timed expenditures.

But the daily warns that in spite of the surplus the state of the republic's finances is tense. It writes that receipts from the value added tax (VAT) are stable, which cannot be said of receipts from legal persons' income taxes. There are problems with receipts from social insurance payments, the daily writes.

German Foreign Minister Kinkel on One-Day Visit

Meciar Receives Kinkel

LD2603180793 Bratislava Rozhlasova Stanica Slovensko Network in Slovak 1100 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Excerpt] German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel, who is visiting Bratislava today, was received by Slovak Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar. After their talks the two representatives addressed journalists at a brief news conference. Agata Stanekova reports:

The chief of German diplomacy is the second highest representative, after Roland Dumas, to visit Slovakia—not taking into account the presidents who visited Bratislava to attend Michal Kovac's inauguration. His meeting with Prime Minister Meciar this morning lasted over an hour. The Slovak prime minister speaks German well, so there was more time for a dialogue.

Speaking at the news conference the German guest said the talks dealt with several themes. Vladimir Meciar, who returned from Moscow only last night, first informed his guest about talks with President Yeltsin and Prime Minister Chernomyrdin. He said he is convinced the reform process in Russia would continue and democratic forces would win in the present conflict.

Klaus Kinkel expressed certain concern at the development in Russia, but said he believed that the aid provided by most developed western countries would be speedy and effective.

Possibilities for solving the conflict in Bosnia were also assessed. Following President's Izetbegovic's approval of the proposal for the division of Bosnia, this question assumed a totally different dimension.

In connection with developments in Slovakia, the German guest expressed his conviction that our country would continue the intensive reform process. The point is that it is in Germany's interest that central European states—i.e. Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia—would join European integration processes at the same time. This is one of the main interests of German diplomacy.

The next question on the agenda was the issue of refugees. As is well known, the Germans have already adopted a number of measures in this sphere. Vladimir Meciar assured his guest that our country would not serve as a transit territory for refugees heading for Germany. For example, in 1992 only about 600 westward bound emigrants passed through Slovakia. In this context, Meciar proposed to his German guest the convening of a meeting of interior ministers from all CSCE countries and the adoption by all members of this organization of a binding agreement on emigrants. [passage omitted]

Kinkel Meets Kovac

LD2603203793 Prague CTK in English 1939 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] Bratislava March 26 (CTK)—German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel attended the inauguration of the Goethe Institute's Bratislava branch today, during his one-day visit to Slovakia.

The Bratislava Institute is the 158th branch of the Munich Goethe Institute, which operates in 74 countries and aiming at spreading German culture and supporting international cultural cooperation. The Bratislava branch will start its full operation in September.

After a short meeting with Slovak President Michal Kovac at Bratislava Castle, Kinkel held talks with Slovak Foreign Minister Jozef Moravcik, concentrating on Germany's assistance to Slovakia in its integration with Western Europe and in creating conditions for foreign investment in the republic.

Also discussed were problems of ethnic minorities, security in the central European region, and the problem of refugees.

We must realise that Europe does not mean only its Western part, and that never in history has the situation been as favourable for uniting all of Europe as it is today, Kinkel told journalists on his departure from Bratislava Airport later in the day. He said it is time to forget about dividing Europe into East and West.

As regards the question of asylum seekers, Kinkel said that he was informed by the Slovak president that the transit of refugees will be resolved positively for the German side.

At the close of the visit, Kinkel invited Slovakia's foreign minister for a visit to Germany.

Holds Joint News Conference

LD2603213893 Bratislava Rozhlasova Stanica Slovensko Network in Slovak 1730 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Excerpts] [Announcer] German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel was on a short one-day visit to Slovakia today. [passage omitted]

Just before his departure the head of the German diplomatic service gave a joint news conference at Bratislava Airport with his Slovak counterpart Jozef Moravcik. Robert Valient and Agata Stankova report:

[Stankova] Klaus Kinkel assessed the talks he held today:

[Begin Kinkel recording in German fading to Slovak translation] The aim of my visit was to prepare a suitable atmosphere for expanding cooperation with what is in fact a newly established state. At the same time my visit was intended to confirm that we consider our relations to Slovakia to be the same as our relations with the Czech Republic, which I visited recently. [passage omitted] I think that the most important thing for Slovakia at present is to allow a flow of investments into the country. Subsequently its economic situation will be gradually solved and Slovakia will come closer to the European Community. We will attempt to help you, and will give advice as far as the forming of new legislative state and market structures are concerned. [end recording]

[Stankova] Slovak Minister of Foreign Affairs Jozef Moravcik assessed the talks as follows:

[Begin Moravcik recording] We are very pleased to have found a similarity in our ideas about the integration of the Slovak Republic in the European economic and security structures. It is a great encouragement for us that support was not purely expressed in words but that we considered this issue and found how to make our way toward the European integrating structures easier for us. We agreed that the most important thing would be to aim the help at creating economic structures compatible with West European economic structures. If we solve this problem our way toward joining European structures will be much faster and more effective.

We also discussed issues linked to the stability of central Europe, as the stability in this region is understandably one of the fundamental interests of our republic and attracts the same interest of the Federal Republic of Germany; we found understanding in this sphere, too. [end recording]

[Stankova] Questions by journalists followed and among the views expressed by them was also the view that Slovakia allegedly moved more toward the East than toward the West European community. Klaus Kinkel reacted to this saying the following:

[Begin Kinkel recording in German fading to Slovak translation] I have to say that my feeling before, during and after these talks is that Slovakia is striving to join the European Community and literally wants to enter its ante-chamber as soon as possible. This is one side. The other side is that Slovakia is a member of the North Atlantic Council. However, it is necessary to say that after the ending of the world's bipolar division we have to abandon East-West confrontations. We should be open. At present we really have a great chance to create a common Europe, because whenever we spoke about Europe we always meant West Europe. And it seems that no other country is as much interested in unification as Germany. [end recording]

Talks on EC, Refugees

LD2603153093 Prague CTK in English 1512 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] Bratislava March 26 (CTK)—Germany is interested in helping the Czech and Slovak Republics to prepare association agreements with the European Community (EC) by the end of April, visiting German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel told a news conference after talks with Slovak Premier Vladimir Meciar here today.

Kinkel said the problem of asylum seekers must be resolved by joint European effort and that it cannot only be the subject of bilateral agreements. Last year about 470,000 asylum seekers came to Germany, half of them through the former Czechoslovakia, he stressed, adding that Germany is ready to help the Czech and Slovak Republics resolve this situation.

Kinkel said German politicians had followed the process of Czechoslovakia's division with sadness, but had been heartened by the peaceful nature of the divorce. He recalled that Germany was one of the first countries to extend diplomatic recognition to the two successor republics.

The German foreign minister said his country wants to help Slovakia in the economic and cultural fields and would like to increase the number of German trade and consulting firms in the country. He cited the opening of a branch of the Goethe Institute in Bratislava as a concrete example of German-Slovak cultural cooperation.

Slovak Premier Vladimir Meciar called Kinkel's visit a good start in the building of political and economic contact between Bonn and Bratislava.

Kinkel later met with Slovak Parliament Chairman Ivan Gasparovic and will meet in the afternoon with Slovak President Michal Kovac and Foreign Minister Jozef Zieleniec.

Meciar Wins HZDS Leadership Vote

LD2803191793 Prague CTK in English 1444 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] Trnava, West Slovakia, March 28 (CTK)—Slovak Premier Vladimir Meciar was reelected chairman of the ruling Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS) at the HZDS Congress today.

In a secret ballot, Meciar received 183 votes of the 228 cast. HZDS Deputy Chairman Milan Knazko, the first candidate ever to run against Meciar for the chairmanship, received 41 votes.

Meciar has been chairman of the movement since June 1991, after his for a Democratic Slovakia faction broke away from the ruling Public Against Violence (VPN) movement in the spring.

During a discussion at the Congress, which began yesterday, Knazko said that the HZDS is standing on the edge of an abyss and blamed Meciar and the HZDS leadership for bringing the movement to its critical situation. He also called for the early convening of a special congress devoted entirely to the movement's internal situation and its future.

Meciar is behaving according to the slogan "might makes right", Knazko said.

Knazko criticised Meciar's stance toward the media, noting that before the June 1992 parliamentary elections the HZDS was the darling of the press, but that now most journalists stand against the movement. Meciar's call for ethical self-regulation among journalists was a call for a return to self-censorship, Knazko said.

He also criticised the HZDS's failure to cultivate even a single reliable political partnership. In view of the movement's recent decline in popularity, according to the latest opinion poll, the HZDS is losing partners on the domestic political scene and not gaining any abroad, he said. This is not politics in a democratic spirit, but rather in the spirit of a ruling party, Knazko said.

I am a decided opponent of improvisation and lies becoming the political modus operandi in the HZDS. Vladimir Meciar makes use of lies as a method of working, not only in public appearances, but in life within the movement. I will permit myself to claim that Vladimir Meciar is gaining a reputation in Europe precisely for his frequent untruths, Knazko said.

He added that the latest example of Meciar's dissembling was the way in which he lobbied for Knazko's dismissal as foreign minister, during which he offered not a single substantial argument.

Former HZDS Deputy Chairman and ex-Foreign Minister Milan Knazko today withdrew from the ruling HZDS at its congress in Trnava, West Slovakia.

Knazko said he would remain in the Slovak parliament as an independent deputy.

* * *

Slovak Minister of Labour and Social and Family Affairs Olga Keltosova was elected HZDS deputy chairwoman in charge of social policies, Meciar's advisor Roman Zelenay became HZDS deputy chairman in charge of foreign policy and Slovak Privatisation Minister Lubomir Dolgos was appointed HZDS deputy chairman in charge of economic issues.

* * *

At a break of the HZDS Congress, Meciar told reporters that Slovakia intends to triple control of the borders with Poland, Hungary and Ukraine.

He said he does not see any reason for building a fence along the Czech-Slovak border.

At the beginning of March the Czech Government spoke in favour of a stricter control of the Czech-Slovak border, particularly for citizens from third countries. Czech Interior Minister Jan Ruml said the border ought to be guarded similarly to borders with other countries neighbouring on the Czech Republic.

The Czech Government has also proposed introducing special regulations for cross-border traffic for Czech and Slovak citizens along the border.

Kovac Opens Congress

LD2703175193 Prague CTK in English 1638 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Text] Trnava, west Slovakia March 27 (CTK)—Slovak President Michal Kovac, who resigned his membership in the ruling Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS) after becoming president in late February, gave the opening address at the HZDS's two-day congress which began here today.

In the address he praised the movement as heir to the ideals which moved the Slovak nation to build a democratic, more just society.

The congress's agenda includes the election of party leadership and discussion of changes to the HZDS's political programme and statutes. A culmination of the dispute between HZDS chairman and Slovak Premier Vladimir Meciar and former Foreign Minister Milan Knazko is also expected along with Knazko's departure as HZDS deputy chairman.

Kovac said the movement's success can be measured by its victories in two elections—as the Public Against Violence (VPN) in 1990 and as the HZDS in 1992—and that this last victory obligates the movement to continue building a law-abiding state, strengthening the democratic system, and carrying out economic transformation, but also to fulfill its historically most complicated task, achieving the sovereignty of the Slovak republic. The HZDS has fulfilled these tasks with honour, he said.

Kovac thanked the movement as a whole and especially the leadership for bringing about Slovak statehood. We can be justifiably proud of how we managed to accomplish such a complex and enormously sensitive process as the division of the common state (of Czechs and Slovaks), he said.

He also said it was in the movement's own interest to respect the principles of equality, mutual honour and tolerance. There may not arise a division of the members and officials into more and less trustworthy. Party unity requires that cliques not be formed, Kovac said.

He also put down the idea of raising one political entity above any other. An equal partnership is a guarantee that we will successfully master the enormously demanding and complex tasks which stand before us. No one political entity can master them, he said.

Meciar Addresses Congress

LD2703150693 Prague Radiozurnal Radio Network in Czech 1400 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Text] The two-day congress of the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia [HZDS], attended by Slovak President Michal Kovac, is continuing in Trnava. Alexander Picha of Czechoslovak Television 1 has the following information:

[Picha] A short while ago HZDS Chairman Vladimir Meciar announced to the congress that independent Slovakia has already achieved a foreign trade surplus, including a surplus in trade with the Czech Republic. In a long speech Vladimir Meciar repeated the same priorities of the HZDS program that he listed out in Modra recently as priorities of the Slovak Government. He stressed the necessity of a free market, which however, must be carefully managed and controlled.

It is also necessary, according to Meciar, to end the equality of appetites in Slovakia and establish the equality of opportunities for all. Slovakia could be the first to achieve the transformation into a new society. Within a short space of time, Meciar stressed, Slovakia could achieve more of its priorities than the Czech Republic.

At the moment the congress is still in its official part. The discussion on internal party matters should be held behind closed doors. The names of candidates for HZDS deputy chairmen posts are ready and they should be the same as the names of Slovak Government vice premiers. According to information which has leaked through, Knazko's name is not among them.

No Changes Expected

LD2603175993 Prague CTK in English 1710 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] Bratislava March 26 (CTK)—Leading representatives of Slovak political parties, interviewed by CTK, expect that no significant changes will come out of the weekend third congress of the ruling Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS).

Past experience of the Communist Party congresses shows that questions of importance are not resolved there, and the same goes for other parties of the type, Chairman of the Christian Democratic Movement (KDH) Jan Carnogursky said.

Slovak ex-Minister of Economics and Chairman of the Slovak National Party (SNS) Ludovit Cernak thinks the outcome of the HZDS congress will not significantly alter the Slovak political scene. Relations between Meciar and Knazko HZDS factions should be finally made clear. (Vladimir Meciar, Slovak premier, is the HZDS chairman and Milan Knazko, the former Slovak foreign minister, its deputy chairman) I think, however, that the HZDS chairman will receive support for his ideas and programme, Cernak said.

Chairman of the Hungarian Christian Democratic Movement (MKDH) Vojtech Bugar said that the movement is not going to split up yet.

Deputy chairman of the Egyutteles Arpad Duka Zolyomi thinks the HZDS is polarized, although Meciar's strong hand is still in charge.

Chairman of the HZDS group of deputies in the Slovak Parliament Ivan Laluha does not expect any personnel changes at the posts of HZDS deputy chairmen.

A parliamentary deputy for the Democratic Left Party (SDL) Pavol Kanis thinks that the HZDS weekend congress will see an open discussion spring up. Tension is going to rise between the movement's top representation and the district structures. The deputies' higher salaries, too, will cause opinions to be vented, Kanis added.

He stressed that the HZDS lacks strong figures who would be able to form real political streams in it. A lot depends on the outcome of the clash between Meciar and Knazko. If knazko feels the congress is letting him down, thinks Kanis, he will make a push for a new political formation. I think Meciar's position after the congress will be further strengthened, Kanis told CTK.

Meciar on Foreign Policy Activities

LD2903011893 Bratislava STV 1 Television Network in Slovak 1710 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Regular Sunday television address by Slovak Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar—live or recorded]

[Excerpts] Good evening, esteemed fellow citizens:

Politically, our society is entering another important stage. The time of individual parties' and movements' congresses is approaching. These congresses will look for new programs and ways of coming to terms with new realities, namely the existence of a sovereign state, a deepening economic crisis, and social tension extant in the society. There are and will not be any short-term ways forward. Completely new system changes have to come in. We have to go to the very essence of our existence, and on this basis create a different type of society. Many of you have been expecting that after November [1989] more democracy will be enough to solve everything. The social crisis, its consequences, foreign relations, integration groupings, and change in economic interests have forced us to seek another way. [It is] the way of fundamental changes in everything. [We will have to] change the whole political system and also develop it in its present form and transform it into a democratic one, change the type of economy, and change the system of all social relations.

I was free last night and I spent it among journalists in a pleasant way. I was very surprised at the ever more numerous questions referring to the news, which the journalists had been receiving, that I allegedly did bring together or that I gave an order to train some unit—a military unit, of course—that would be ready to intervene against citizens in case of need. I want to tell you that I am the prime minister since that was your will and you wanted it in the elections. I want to tell you that I have no personal ambitions and no goals, neither property-wise nor career-wise nor any else. I cannot be a prime minister against your will. I cannot act against your interests. I have not given any order of this kind and I do not intend to give one. As an interior minister I visited the emergency police unit in Bratislava that had taken action in Bratislava. [sentence as received] I pushed for the liquidation of this unit. I will not do anything of that kind. If somebody else wants to do that he will have to do it without me. Your interest is the only interest of mine. I do admit that I do not succeed in everything but whatever I do I am doing because of you.

Last week was marked by extremely important foreign policy activities. Let me begin with the one that took place on 26 March. I held talks with German Foreign Minster Kinkel. As is tradition during significant talks, the meeting lasted longer than would be usual according to the protocol. I will take the opportunity to point out certain issues of the talks which have not yet been released by the press. The first one is that Minister Kinkel has reassured me that their stand is such that the Slovak Republic has, its starting point notwithstanding, has the best chance out of all the countries in the Eastern Bloc to get out of the marasm in which we are finding ourselves. It is an extraordinarily important and positive assessment because today it is not only backed by the minister but I have met with it during numerous contacts with businessmen and all other sorts of people. The world is beginning to believe in us—let us believe in ourselves, too. The whole business will be that much easier.

The second important point was Minister Kinkel's expression of thanks for the way in which the German minority is being treated in Slovakia. He evaluated the situation very positively. At the time when minorities' rights in Slovakia are being doubted this is an extremely important fact. He expressed his thanks publicly, too. Another important moment was the minister's support and trust in the new foreign minister. [passage omitted]

Another important fact is that we have also discussed the issues of refugees movement. [passage omitted]

We discussed the issue of good relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and Slovakia. Above all, we agreed on the form assistance should take. The issue of assistance in setting up standards, analyses, financial and banking programs has been agreed. We have so far not asked for economic aid of another type. Talks on this subjects are still to come. I think that the visit gives a good basis for mutual cooperation and trust between the Federal Republic of Germany and Slovakia. Apart from political issues we have discussed economic ones, namely privatization, acquisition of property, introduction of capital. We also spoke about the territory of the former German Democratic Republic, taking into account the contradictory character of everything that goes on around us in all neighboring countries.

The second important visit was the one to Moscow. It was significant as I was received by the premier of the Russian Federation Government, and after all they are a considerably larger country than we are. We spent two hours and twenty minutes in a private conversation and this is not usual at the diplomatic practice at all. [passage omitted]

What is our concern regarding the Russians? Considerable amounts of energy, 55 billion cubic meters of gas, arrive from Russia to us and via us to the West. We want it to flow without interruption. There is a gain in it for us, too, of course. We are connected to Russian oil. As it will flow in, the Slovnaft [oil refinery] and our other chemical industry [enterprises] will be running. We are connected to raw material resources. We want to cooperate. We cooperated in the production sphere and we want to cooperate. What slows us down is of course the mechanism of payments, mechanism of supplies, selection of our partners as not everything in their country can be anymore done on the central level. Decentralization trends on the level of republics are rather strong.

On the basis of this we arrived at the conclusion that the only way was to concluded an enormous number of new agreements which will regulate our new relations in a totally different way to make it possible for our enterprises to engage in trade contacts in the way ensuring that we can directly cash [kapitalizovat] the money due to us, supply goods without fear of losing the money. Russia owes us what we lent it. There are three kinds of debts. The first one is [the result of] a loan given by the Czechoslovak Federation; the second one is the money owed for unpaid goods and services; and the third one is at companies' level. We agreed on the method how to do away with them in the way which will damage neither side, meeting each other halfway. We follow this path.

A meeting with President Yeltsin was also very important. [passage omitted]

We were briefed about the internal political situation and I do believe that it will develop in a peaceful, cultured way without posing a threat either to the Russian citizens or to the neighboring republics. I also believe that democratic mechanisms will be renewed and will become effective following an adoption of the Constitution and new elections. We were also informed about stands concerning Slovakia. Above all we were assured that the Russian Federation supported the unchangeability of the Slovak Republic's border in its present form. Under no circumstances will it allow any doubts to be cast on this matter. We were assured that as certain obligations were being assumed concerning supplies of arms to Hungary, cooperation with Slovakia would be equally open if we ask for this. We have not put such a request forward while there.

Another important point of our talks concerned the issues of Slovakia's position as far as East-West relations are concerned—full support was given to us on this issue, to our philosophy of mediation and cooperation. Other important spheres are linked to looking for the system of security guarantees in central Europe where we found understanding, including the relation to the NATO on which we also agreed.

Esteemed fellows citizens, I will return to the sentence I have already said here—let us trust ourselves, the world has begun to trust us! I do believe in a better tomorrow, too!

Meciar Views Russian Trip, Opposition Parties

LD2603211193 Bratislava Rozhlasova Stanica Slovensko Network in Slovak 1700 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Interview with Slovak Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar by Lydia Mrazova on 26 March; place not given—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Mrazova] Prime Minister, you signed economic and trade agreements in Russia yesterday. You have described the trip as successful. A number of political observers have nevertheless expressed surprise at the fact that at this precise moment, when the situation is so unstable in Russia, you were the first foreign politician to decided to visit that country. Was it not somewhat like skating on thin ice?

[Meciar] We must bear in mind that what is happening in Russia at present is a struggle for reforms, a struggle for a democratic direction, and that needs support. While others have confined themselves to verbal statements, I committed myself personally. Should there be any civic unrest in Russia, a situation may arise which would endanger everyone in the region and we are not far away.

Of course, it is necessary to observe Russia not only from the angle of the situation today but also from the point of view of future prospects. It is a country which represents an enormous market, enormous sources of energy, and we are to a significant degree dependent on them. The fact that I have defended energy supplies to our country and also further to the West proves that I have actually been working there also on behalf of those Western states that have started having some doubts about these issues. [passage omitted]

[Mrazova] Last week in this interview you said, Prime Minister, that personnel changes in the government had not come to an end. It is these personnel changes that are being held against you most of all. What then leads you towards considering further changes?

[Meciar] We must understand the government as an executive organ. Its politics is work. When its departments are functional then the work of the government is good. If a department is stagnating, then, naturally, the person who has the political responsibility is blamed and that is the head of the department. Personally, I am not preparing any further personnel changes. There were doubts regarding one member of the government, whether or not he would stay, but I hope he abandoned the idea. So the situation is somewhat different.

Should changes take place, they should not rest in changing the person, but selecting the candidate to the post of deputy premier for economy. He or she is more than needed; it should be a person who, both by age and abilities, should guarantee the concept of economic reform. An offer was given to the Party of the Democratic Left, but it was not accepted. [passage omitted]

[Mrazova] Jan Carnogursky, your political rival and predecessor, longed for the unity of the people after he took up his post. This was not successful. You are also appealing for the unity of Slovakia; the only snag is that you are not being successful, according to our information, in offering real cooperation to the opposition, although a while ago you talked about one of our offers. Will this attitude of yours change within the foreseeable future?

[Meciar] Let us discuss realistically what unity is. We shall never be uniform and we shall never march left, left in unison. Those times have long passed. There does however exist a certain real way out which can be respected. First of all one has to respect the results of the elections. Those who speculate as how to change them conduct themselves undemocratically and that is not our joint path.

Second, one has to respect the Constitution of the state. If you see the unity of Slovakia in the unity of political parties, then, despite the fact that there are fewer of them in the parliament than before, this is illusory. They cannot have the same program—that would make for the national front. We do not want that. The program interlinking is so varied, so unclear—for example if the chairman of the Slovak National Party tells me that there will be the Democratic Party, the Republican Party, then the party of small and medium businessmen, and then he gives me the fourth alternative—there is no program distinctness. I want to cooperate, but on the basis of what program? If some parties have not drawn the conclusion that there is an independent state now and they have a different state in their program then I ask them whether they are capable of accepting this state or whether their program is aimed at something else. If this is not eliminated it is difficult to talk about it.

There is one question concerning this entire consultation that baffles me. It is not an argument about the program of Slovakia because these parties have no other program than the government and they have no better one. They have no better one than the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia [HZDS]. The discussion goes: who from which party is in which office. And that is dangerous. It is not an attempt to solve a social interest, it is a struggle for [word indistinct]. One cannot build a coalition on that. If we talk, for example, about realistic division of the influence in the executive power, well, we are in favor of it. But who is willing to take part in the executive power nowadays, with the risks and difficulties which exist in this power? Who will take responsibility at the time when economy is entering a period of decline, social aspects are being infringed upon, and social tension is increasing—who is willing to associate with it? No one. On the contrary, all this is an attempt to leave this crisis period alone, leave it to the HZDS. When enlivenment comes, at that moment they can join in the executive power. But that is a game that we too are capable of understanding. If, for example, I know that political parties are clashing and even the Christan Democratic Movement is debating how to get back into the government, I take it as not a very democratic affair because if they have any sense they know that with the balance of power in the parliament they would basically bloc the entire legislative activity. And that is not the aim.

So that is why there will never be uniformity and it would be unfortunate if it were the ruling notion again. Unity should be in the national and state interests. That is at least the strategic role that, by dividing we might not [word indistinct]. The fact that we will have different views, that someone will say that things appear to them differently than they are in reality—that is his right. Maybe a different angle of seeing will help make the viewpoint more objective. [passage omitted]

We actually must live with the fact that the government is not backed by any media, not by a single newspaper, nor the radio, nor television. What is lacking is fair information about the government's activities. This is true, of course, also of the activities of the prime minister. Just look at the kind of attacks—very uncivil and still continuing—on the radio. That really upsets me, because they go beyond the frame of decency and law. Should it go on, we might arrive at a situation in which we are actually isolated from the public.

The second point which is important in this respect is that these trends are appearing everywhere in society. When the social crisis continues we mitigate it, but we do not know how to stop it, despite the fact that we are mitigating it. This, in turn, evokes the need for a new model of social relations—and that cannot be done exclusively; one must differentiate in it. [passage omitted] This situation will change as soon as society is stabilized and begins to liven up. This should happen next year.

Together with the fall of popularity, public opinion research proves that the membership base of, for example, the Party of the Democratic Left, continues to be the same. There are only very small differences there; in the Christian Democratic Movement it is the same. That means that they have their firm followers who will continue to number about the same.

The situation in the HZDS is different. There are people who are leaving us, but they are not going anywhere. That is the difference. There are doubts. [passage omitted]

SDL Chairman Responds to Meciar's 'Offer' of Post

LD2603211893 Bratislava Rozhlasova Stanica Slovensko Network in Slovak 1730 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Excerpts] In our "Radiozurnal" program at noon we broadcast an interview with [Slovak Prime Minister] Vladimir Meciar in which he spoke about personnel issues inside the Slovak Government. [passage omitted] The Party of the Democratic Left [SDL] Chairman Peter Weiss asked to be given an opportunity to respond.

[Weiss] First, I would like to say that we have received no offer of serious political talks. Semijocular remarks in the anterooms or during National Council sessions cannot, of course, be considered an offer to participate in government. If we were to join in such a game, we would lose the respect due to politicians. Moreover, in the SDL such serious matters as the eventual joining of the government are not decided by the chairman of the party alone.

Second, Mr. Meciar said more than once in public that the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia is not considering a coalition and that, moreover, it would consider it to be a factor of possible instability.

Third, we do not consider it necessary to repeat the experience of Mr. Cernak's participation in the government and of the quiet coalition of the Slovak National Party which accompanied that participation. Unless the ground rules are set down, political cooperation simply cannot work for long. [passage omitted]

Protest Letter Sent to Klaus On Share Freeze

LD2603223293 Prague CTK in English 2138 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] Bratislava March 26 (CTK)—The Slovak Chamber of Commerce and Industry sent an open letter to Czech Premier Vaclav Klaus today, strongly protesting against the Czech Government's decision to withold issuing shares to the investment coupon holders from the Slovak Republic.

A copy of the letter was given to CTK by the chamber's executive committee today.

We are aware that the Czech Government has the power to annul private ownership of both natural and legal persons in the Czech Republic and we feel obliged to make this known to relevant international bodies, the letter to Klaus reads. The chamber representatives recall that besides shares from the first wave of coupon privatisation, Slovak citizens also own other property in the Czech Republic whose ownership, they say, might also be questioned in case an agreement on property division sought by the two republics is not reached.

Opposition Parties Plan to Merge

LD2703200093 Prague CTK in English 1745 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Text] Bratislava March 27 (CTK)—Leading representatives of the right-wing parties in Slovakia—the Party of Conservative Democrats (SKD) and the Slovak Civic Democratic Party (ODSS)—agreed at a session in Kosice, east Slovakia, today that their parties' goals and programmes are identical.

A communique from the session, convened at the SKD's initiative, said that the two parties plan to merge in the foreseeable future.

After the session, ODSS Chairman Jozef Bednar told reporters that specific dates for the merger will be discussed on Tuesday, March 30.

SKD Chairman Pavol Hagyari said the Slovak Republic lacks a strong right wing conservative party capable of leading it out of its current crisis.

SKD representatives also addressed members of a conservative faction in the Democratic Party and expressed readiness to welcome them as rank-and-file members.

Hagyari did not rule out the possibility of early parliamentary elections. ODSS Leader Bednar added that the HZDS [Movement for a Democratic Slovakia] will fail to resolve the political crisis in Slovakia. The sooner the crisis occurs, the sooner the situation in the Slovak Republic will stabilise, he said.

Radio Council Responds to Director's Accusations

LD2603213793 Bratislava Rozhlasova Stanica Slovensko Network in Slovak 1730 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Excerpts] The Council of the Slovak Republic for Radio and Television Broadcasting, which is an independent body of the National Council of the Slovak Republic, should, besides other things, also control the observation of laws pertaining to radio and television broadcasts, promote the plurality of broadcasts and independence. The granting of licenses, too, lies within its powers.

At its extraordinary session this afternoon the Council discussed the presentation of the central director of Slovak Radio, Dr. Vladimir Stefko, in the noon "Radiozurnal" program yesterday. He informed the public about the prepared draft legislation which would significantly restrict the possibilities of spreading Slovak radio broadcasts. The outcome of the council's extraordinary session today is a statement. The council has asked for an opportunity to inform the public. The statement will be introduced by the council's deputy chairman, Fedor Bartko.

[Begin Bartko recording] [passage omitted] The Council of the Slovak Republic for Radio and Television Broadcasting assures the wide circle of listeners, who have been addressed several times by Dr. Stefko, that it does not intend to liquidate the news and comments station S-1 nor the artistic and cultural station S-2, nor the minorities and regional broadcasts of Slovak Radio. On the contrary, it is the intention of the council to fully implement the law. In the same spirit we want to create conditions for the existence and functioning of a dual system of broadcasts, that is, for the existence of private radio stations side by side with Slovak Radio as an institution of public service to implement Article 36 of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic. [passage omitted]

The Council of the Slovak Republic for Radio and Television Broadcasting considers the broadcasts of (CD International), which is operated by Slovak Radio on a contractual basis, as an infringement of law 468/91 Vol. which stipulates that the partner of the commercial company applying for the license, or to which a license has been granted, must not be an operator designated by law. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Foreign Ministry Signs Protocol With Romania

AU2603144593 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1333 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] Bratislava ROMPRES, 26/3/1993—A cooperation protocol between the Romanian and Slovak Foreign Ministries was signed in Bratislava following consultations between a Romanian delegation headed by Ion Gorita, foreign secretary of state, and Miroslav Mojzita [name as received], secretary general of the Slovak Foreign Ministry.

Exports Show 'Drastic' Decrease; Forint Devalued

LD2903063693 Budapest MTI in English 0536 GMT 29 Mar 93

[Text] Budapest, March 26 (MTI)—Hungary's foreign trading companies consider it unlikely for export to increase this year as dynamically as it did last year.

The Hungarian Foreign Trading Federation held a session this week to survey prospects of foreign trade.

Among the factors hindering the expansion of export, the traders mentioned the decrease in industrial and agricultural production, high domestic taxes, and the narrowing gap between Western and domestic wages.

Addressing the session, Minister of International Economic Relations Bela Kadar said that the drastic decrease in the profitability of export could mainly be attributed to the gradual revaluation of the Hungarian forint, which favoured importers.

In a move to counterbalance this trend, the Hungarian Government, in agreement with the National Bank of Hungary, devalued the forint against the Western currencies by 2.9 per cent today.

Gross Domestic Product Falls 4-6 Percent in 1992

LD2903073093 Budapest MTI in English 0600 GMT 29 Mar 93

[Text] Budapest, March 23 (MTI)—Preliminary figures show that Hungary's Gross Domestic Product [GDP] fell by 4-6 percent last year, to HUF [Hungarian forint] 2.8 trillion, or about USD 33 billion, against a forecast decline of 0-2pc, the Finance Ministry reported on Tuesday. The ministry said final figures should be released in May once corporate tax statistics were compiled.

Last year, export volume rose by 1-2pc, against a forecast 6-9pc, mainly due to the drought which cut agricultural exports by 3-4pc. Imports in 1992, accounted in USD, were the same as 1991, representing a 6pc drop in volume.

Meanwhile, domestic consumption fell by 2-3pc, against a projected 0.5-1pc increase, caused by the 4-5pc drop in real per capita incomes, coupled with a large increase in savings. Investments were down by 6-9pc. However, investments by shareholder companies (RT and KFT) [expansions unknown] rose dramatically, with the share of imported machinery and equipment increasing.

Domestic utilisation of GDP fell by 6-8pc, partially reflecting growing risks and more cautious investments. Gross production fell 6-8pc, with industrial production down 10pc, and food and agricultural output down 14-16pc.

On the outlook for this year, the ministry predicted growth in GDP of 0-3pc, although export growth would be 2-3 percentage points below the earlier target of 5-7pc. This however, could be counterbalanced by a 1pc growth in domestic consumption or a 5pc increase in investment.

Spokesman on Enforcing Sanctions on FRY

LD2503171493 Budapest MTI in English 1616 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] Budapest, March 25 (MTI)—Did Hungary actually request German patrol boats arrive on the Danube to control observance of the UN embargo against Serbia?—MTI asked the Hungarian foreign affairs spokesman, Janos Herman.

Herman said a representative of the Western European Union gave a preliminary report some weeks ago at the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, that the organisation is working on a contract to dispatch patrol boats to the sections of the Danube that neighbour Serbia, including the Hungarian section. They would be to help more effectively control observance of UN Security Council sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro. That this prospective activity would have a military character was not raised, the spokesman said, and added that the Hungarian side in principle assured its support for the idea.

Hungarian Foreign Ministry officials note that controlling the observance of the sanctions along the Hungarian section of the Danube is being done properly. They also announced that a decision can be made only in full view of the plan's concrete details.

The Foreign Ministry has informed parliament's foreign affairs committee about this idea.

The foreign affairs spokesman said it was clear Hungary did not initiate the patrol boats' dispatch. States and international organisations concerned are currently holding consultations.

Lack of Funds Delays Nagymaros Demolition

LD2803105993 Budapest Kossuth Radio Network in Hungarian 0800 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] The start on dismantling the unfinished Nagymaros power station system has been postponed until September. The May deadline had to be modified because foreign banks failed to give any credit for the work to start. Csaba Karolyi, leader of the office coordinating work on the project said that the companies commissioned with the demolition work have turned to the Hungarian banks. About 7-800 million forints will be needed to start the work.

Szwonder Interviewed on 'Rifle Affair'

WS2603121493 Warsaw TVP Television Second Program Network in Polish 0700 GMT 26 Mar 93

[From the "Panorama" newscast]

[Text] Probably in a month's time, Rajmund Szwonder will be able to return to work in the Lucznik plant. Now he is still in the cardiology ward of the Voivodship Hospital in Radom. Since the morning, he has been undergoing detailed examinations. The doctors say that he will stay in the hospital at least a week.

[Begin recording] [Correspondent Agnieszka Gawerska, identified via screen caption] In what circumstances was the arrest in Frankfurt made?

[Szwonder] We were arrested after the second day of the talks, because during the first day of the talks, in which I participated for an hour, all the routine issues related to the contract were discussed. The gentlemen who were the buyers were introduced to me as the inspectors and plenipotentiaries of the Philippine Government. They were supposed to discuss the way the commodities were to be taken over, payment dates, and means of payment. These were all the routine matters that are necessary to conclude such a contract. In the first charge that I received, I was referred to as the head of the Radom criminal band.

[Gawerska] Apart from the rumors saying that it was an American provocation which aimed at eliminating us from the arms trade market, do you not exclude the possibility that it also had to do with the internal Polish competition?

[Szwonder] Well, I have no reason to say so. I just have no reason.

[Gawerska] What can you tell us about the Urbil company and Mr. Tarka and Mr. Koperwas, who took part in the negotiations but were not arrested?

[Szwonder] I knew Mr. Tarka and Mr. Koperwas before, from [word indistinct] activities. In the old days the only company that was licensed to trade in arms was Ce... [pauses] It was not called Cenzin, but still, it was a state agency and a monopolist in the arms trade. I had never heard of the Urbil company before.

[Gawerska] Now, what type of intermediary was the ATS company? How do you evaluate their activities?

[Szwonder] It was a company that came to us and proposed a contract. It proposed a partner for us. From what I have learned so far, I know that they are not much of arms traders: they have not even sold a catapult to the Pygmies.

[Gawerska] Then why was Lucznik forced to use the services of such intermediaries?

[Szwonder] Because it did not have much of a choice. Perhaps the popular opinion is that it is enough to come to Poland, bring the money, and buy arms. This is false. The checking... [pauses] We are still a country in which it is relatively difficult to buy arms. [end recording]

Trade Unions Propose Increase in Minimum Wage

AU2603141493 Warsaw PAP in English 1740 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] Warsaw, March 24—The Solidarity union, the All-Poland Alliance of Trade Unions (OPZZ) and Solidarity-80 today proposed to increase the lowest wages in the second quarter of this year and came out against the government proposal to limit the basic goods and services basket that serves as the basis to set the minimum wage.

Under the government proposal, the lowest monthly wage would remain at the same level of 1.5 million zlotys (about 91 dollars). During the talks, held in the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, Solidarity demanded to raise it to 1,620,000 zlotys, while the OPZZ and Solidarity-80 called for 1,850,000 and 1,800,000 zlotys respectively.

The government wants to halt a rapid growth of lowest wages in order to avoid a further wage leveling in the public sector, the ministry's spokesman Rafal Szymczyk warned.

If the government solution is rejected, the financial means destined for pay rises in the public sector will go for the increases of the lowest wages.

If the goods basket remains unchanged, the lowest wage would increase by an average of 11 percent this year, or by 3.7 percent if it is limited according to the government proposal, Deputy Labour Minister Irena Woycicka said.

Solidarity, Government Agree on Enterprise Pact

AU2603182293 Warsaw PAP in English 2237 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] Warsaw, March 25—The government and the Presidium of the Solidarity trade union's National Commission have reached an agreement on the system of compensations for the growth of the costs of living, Labour Minister Jacek Kuron said today after a meeting between representatives of several ministries and the Presidium of the National Commission.

He said that the sides still differed in opinions on the future of the budget sector.

After the meeting, Solidarity leader Marian Krzaklewski stated that in the near future the union should concentrate on welfare protection measures which would be realistic for the state budget.

The main topic of the talks was the state of implementation of government-Solidarity agreements but newsmen were offered no comment on the issue.

Last Tuesday, the Presidium of the National Commission criticized the government's implementation of agreements, especially the one signed in early January which ended a collective dispute over the compensation for the growth of the costs of living. The Presidium also criticized the government's work on the enterprise pact.

Walesa Supports 'Siec' Economic Program

LD2603220093 Warsaw PAP in English 2108 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] Opole, March 26—President Lech Walesa said he supported the economic programme proposed by the National Alliance of "Siec" (Network) Solidarity Factory Commissions after he had heard the discussion at the organization's meeting in Zdzieszowice, province of Opole, on Friday [26 March].

"This is my programme, I support your proposals and I will try to get them implemented," he said and assured the meeting that the programme does not lead to a conflict with the government whose prime minister has just vowed to adopt a mass privatization programme.

Lech Walesa promised to ask Privatization Minister Janusz Lewandowski to meet with "Siec" leaders and combine the privatization plans of the ministry and the "Siec" and eventually make "one, better conception out of two."

Unionists of the "Siec" want a privatization where each adult citizen-employee gets a low interest (max. 3 percent) investment credit of 300 million zlotys (about 20,000 U.S. dollars) to buy a share of state owned property and then repays it during at least 20 years.

Walesa Meets Brittan, Calls For Better Cooperation

AU2603145693 Warsaw PAP in English 1310 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] Warsaw, March 25—The reform process in Poland is not just an internal matter, and it is important for the European Communities to realize that what is at issue is a general philosophy and conception of assistance for the countries of central-eastern Europe, President Lech Walesa said today at a meeting in Warsaw with Sir Leon Brittan, EC commissioner for external economic relations.

During a two-hour meeting at the official presidential residence, President Walesa stressed that Poland sought more effective economic and political cooperation with the EC. "We are not looking for sentiment, but for equal partnership," he said.

The president expressed his dismay at the low level of EC involvement in the transformations in the countries of the region, and criticized the continuing limitations being placed on access for Polish goods to EC markets.

Sir Leon Brittan expressed the hope that Polish goods would eventually secure greater access to EC markets, but he stressed that this would not be easy, given the depth of the worldwide recession. He added that, in current EC thinking, assistance for Russia ought to result in wider opportunities for the development of trade with the Visegrad countries (Poland, Hungary, and the Czech and Slovak Republics).

President Walesa said that he saw the Visegrad countries as a natural transit-route for western help to the east. He added that the countries emerging from the communist bloc should be integrated as soon as possible into European structures. "It is time Europe realized that blocking minor issues could lead to the blocking of the most important ones, and even to the loss of the chance to build a secure and stable Europe," he said.

"We are at a cross-roads. The direction we choose is very important, and every mistake Europe makes could cost her a great deal," the president concluded.

PSL May Join Government if Economic Policy Altered

LD2603203993 Warsaw PAP in English 2015 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] Warsaw, March 26—The Polish Peasant Party (PSL) may join the cabinet if it alters its economic policy so that tc better promote the interests of the nation, the PSL spokesman told a news conference on Friday [26 March].

Spokesman Ryszard Miazek added that before the PSL join the government it must hold programmatic negotiations with the present coalition.

He said that his party will support the mass privatisation programme if the experiment covers no more than 100-200 enterprises and when institutions appointed to manage the privatised enterprises assume the responsibility for the success of the whole programme. "According to PSL, the current privatisation programme only changes the system of management without real specification of property and citizens rights," Miazek stressed.

Deputies Object To Installation of Cross in Sejm

AU2603145493 Warsaw PAP in English 1921 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] Warsaw, March 25—Sixty-two MP's [members of parliament] have signed a letter handed to the Sejm speaker last Saturday [22 March] and protesting over the planned hanging of a cross in the chamber, Barbara Labuda, MP, told a press conference here today.

The request to put a cross in the Sejm hall was put forward by a group of 155 deputies coming from almost all caucuses and circles on 5 March. The opponents of the cross come chiefly from the Democratic Left Alliance

(SLD), Democratic Union (UD), Polish Liberal Programme (PPL), Polish Peasant Party (PSL) and the Union of Labour (UP).

In another development, a group of 30 intellectuals and artists sent an open letter to the organizers of the abortion referendum campaign calling on them to "defend the neutrality of the state in the area of religion and beliefs."

The signatories of the letter, including Mikolaj Kozakiewicz, former Sejm speaker; Wlodzimierz Cimoszewicz, a leader of the SLD, Zofia Kuratowska, a leader of the UD, and Marek Balicki, deputy minister of health, claim that the 1.3 million signatures collected under the petition for holding a referendum on penalizing abortion "attest to public anxiety over the future of Polish democracy, freedom and human rights in Poland."

The group appealed to the advocates of the referendum to "organize civic self-defense" against "small political parties using national-Christian phraseology and supported by the Catholic Church hierarchy" which have gained influence "sufficient to let them create laws running against public expectations."

Ciaston: Evidence in Popieluszko Case Not 'Contradictory'

AU2603141693 Warsaw PAP in English 1528 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] Warsaw, March 24—The former deputy minister of the interior responsible for intelligence and counterintelligence told the Warsaw Provincial Court today that his contradictory accounts concerning the murder in 1984 of the pro-Solidarity priest Jerzy Popieluszko were true and complemented one another.

Wladyslaw P. told the court that Popieluszko's murder was planned and executed solely by the four interior ministry officers tried and convicted for this in 1985. He was testifying as a witness during the trial of two former Interior Ministry generals facing charges of inspiring, masterminding, and directing the crime.

This stood in obvious contradiction to what the same witness told the prosecuting officers in 1991. He then maintained that the initiative to carry out the murder must have come from someone more senior than the four convicts, that is someone from the highest leadership of the ministry.

One of the two accused generals, Wladyslaw Ciaston, was a deputy interior minister at the time of the murder.

Questioned by the judge, the witness claimed the two versions of his account were not irreconcilable. He suggested the earlier version, that offered in 1991, was the effect of a conversation he had had with the prosecutor taking his testimony.

The prosecutor, Andrzej Witkowski, was later removed from investigating the case by his superiors, who believed Witkowski's efforts to extend the indictment to cover also former top officials of the Interior Ministry were groundless and led to unacceptable delays.

Discussions with Germany on Asylum Law Problems

LD2703205893 Warsaw PAP in English 1942 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Text] Warsaw, March 27—Polish and German interior ministers Andrzej Milczanowski and Rudolf Seiters, who is on a two-day working visit to Poland, on Saturday discussed the new German asylum law.

The Interior Ministry's spokesman Piotr Szczypinski declined to disclose the details of the talks.

Under the new German asylum law, asylum-seekers who entered Germany illegally and were refused asylum in that country, would be deported to the so-called safe countries through which they came to Germany (Poland is among them). This could lead to a mass influx of refugees to Poland, for which it is not prepared.

Three rounds of Polish-German negotiations have been held since January on the consequences Poland may suffer after the law is implemented, producing no results as yet. The Polish side stressed that the law should not be made retroactive.

The next round of talks is scheduled for April 5-6 in Bonn.

Prime Minister Suchocka Visits Germany

WA2503194893

For reportage on the visit of Prime Minister Suchocka to Germany, including her talks with German Chancellor Kohl, see the Germany section of the 25 March West Europe DAILY REPORT.

Iliescu Welcomes Zhelev Upon Arrival

AU2703155193 Bucharest Radio Romania Network in Romanian 0900 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Report on statements by President Ion Iliescu and Bulgarian President Zhelyu Zhelev at Otopeni Airport in Bucharest on 27 March by unidentified reporter; Iliescu speaks in Romanian with superimposed Bulgarian translation; Zhelev speaks in Bulgarian with superimposed Romanian translation; following from Iliescu is from the Romanian, from Zhelev from the Bulgarian—recorded]

[Text] [Reporter] Dear listeners, you are in a direct link with the official hall at Otopeni Airport. According to schedule, the plane with the Bulgarian delegation led by President Zhelyu Zhelev landed here 30 minutes ago. Thus, the first visit of the Bulgarian president to Romania and the seventh meeting with Romanian President Ion Iliescu begins today. Immediately after the delegation got off the plane, the arrival ceremony took place, the two national anthems were played, and the guard of honor was reviewed.

After a few moments of respite in the official hall, where brief statements were made to journalists, the two presidents and the members of the delegation headed for their cars and left for Cotroceni Palace, where talks will begin in 30 minutes.

Here are the statements by the two heads of state to reporters:

[Iliescu] It gives us particular pleasure to greet the arrival of the president of the neighboring and friendly country, Mr. Zhelyu Zhelev, who is paying a visit to our country for the first time. This is a visit that reciprocates our visit to Bulgaria when we concluded the political treaty between our countries. I believe that that was a major political event, which marked the political will of the two countries to set the traditional relations between our countries on new ground, taking into consideration the changes that have taken place and are still taking place in our countries, on our continent, and throughout the world.

Today we are going to review the development of bilateral relations, which we assess as good. We will exchange views on events and progress of international affairs, and we will establish procedures to be followed in order to consolidate and develop bilateral relations.

Once again I would like to welcome you to our country.

[Zhelev] Esteemed President, this is not only my first official visit to Romania but my first visit in any capacity. No matter how difficult it is for me to admit it, this is indeed true. I believe that during my visit here we will have the opportunity to discuss very important issues. Certainly, the evolution of our bilateral relations in the period since we signed the political treaty will be discussed. Another set of issues will certainly be the crisis in the former Yugoslavia and the current events in that country. This is necessary because our countries are neighbors with that country and the conflicts that take place there affect us directly. A third group of issues that we will have to discuss is the events in Russia and the possible impact of those events on our countries and on the Balkans. I am happy that the relations between our countries are progressing positively and I could even say that our bilateral relations, especially the commercial ones, have progressed so far especially because of the free initiative of the private owners who achieved better results than our countries and state institutions have.

Although it is cold outside and a very cold wind has started blowing, I believe that our discussions will progress in a friendly spirit, as they always have. Thank you for your attention.

Zhelev, Iliescu Hold News Conference

AU2803133893 Sofia BTA in English 2141 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Veselin Konstantinov report: "Bulgaria, Romania Expand Cooperation"]

[Text] Bucharest, March 27 (BTA)—Bulgaria and Romania will expand cooperation in the economic field and ease communications. The countries hold close views on the situation in the Balkans and share a desire to integrate into European structures. Bilateral relations are making progress after the signing of a Treaty on Friendship in 1992, the presidents of Bulgaria, Zhelyu Zhelev and Romania Ion Iliescu, stressed at a press conference rounding up Mr. Zhelev's one-day official visit to Bucharest.

The presidents reiterated the countries' stance of non-intervention in the Yugo-conflict and spoke for political solutions. According to Dr. Zhelev, unless the Balkan states respond to military provocation, the war cannot possibly spread over the Balkans.

The presidents think Black Sea economic cooperation should develop on bi- and multilateral basis, without being institutionalized.

President Zhelev assured that chairing the Council of Europe next year, Bulgaria will help Romania join this organization, as an expression of good will and good-neighbourliness. As associate members of the EC, Bulgaria and Romania should help each other to integrate into European structures, according to the presidents.

The presidents discussed the situation in Russia. We do not support President Yeltsin as office holder, we support reform and democratic processes, the Bulgarian president said.

The developments in Russia have direct relevance to Romania, which is interested in maintaining good relation with that country, President Iliescu said.

The presidents share the view Bulgaria and Romania are taking heavy losses implementing the embargo on Serbia and Montenegro. At the same time, they stressed Bulgaria and Romania will keep implementing the UN Security Council resolutions. The countries are relying on the patrol boats granted by the U.S. Government to help strengthen control over traffic on the Danube.

Bulgaria is losing between 40 and 60 million dollars a month, as a result of the embargo, Mr. Zhelev noted.

President Iliescu said the presidents expressed political will to expand bilateral cooperation and the executive will seek ways to do this in practice.

Romania is the major gate to Europe for Bulgaria, with the war raging in former Yugoslavia, Dr. Zhelev said. The presidents discussed measures to ease the transit of Bulgarian vehicles through Romania and traffic passing through the Ruse-Giurgiu border checkpoint. They agreed on the need to open more checkpoints and ferry facilities across the Danube. Joint projects to build one or two bridges across the Danube will be completed.

Experts of Bulgaria and Romania will meet in Sofia next week to discuss the promotion of economic relations. They will prepare a meeting of the co-chairmen of the Mixed Bulgarian-Romanian Committee in Bucharest from April 7 to 9.

According to President Zhelev, the sides should prioritize the drafting of agreements on reciprocal investment protection and the avoidance of double taxation. The presidents advocate the establishment of a joint Chamber of Industry and Commerce and a joint bank.

Bilateral trade doubled in 1992, with the private sector accounting for 80 percent of trade, they noted.

During President Zhelev's visit, the Foreign Ministries of Bulgaria and Romania signed a protocol on cooperation, forming a legal basis for further diplomatic contacts. The protocol was signed by Bulgarian Deputy Foreign Minister Dimitur Ikonomov and the state secretary at the Romanian Foreign Ministry Marcel Dinu.

President Zhelev was accompanied by his adviser on foreign policy affairs Kamen Velichkov and Deputy Trade Minister Kiril Velev. On the Romanian side, the talks were attended by the Minister of State and Foreign Minister Teodor Melescanu, the state secretary at the Ministry of Trade, Liviu Paunescu, and presidential advisers.

This evening President Zhelev returned to Sofia.

Iliescu on Chisinau Radio, Discussess Ties

AU2803200493 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1849 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Text] Bucharest, ROMPRES, 27/3/1993—"We have welcomed as a historical moment the emergence of the independent state of the Republic of Moldova, and we appreciate as normal and vital a consolidation of this statute of the Republic of Moldova, which does not mean, however, any kind of hostility or deterioration of the relations with other states which have emerged on the [word indistinct] on this area's map", said President Ion Iliescu in an interview granted to the Radio Chisinau station on the anniversary of 75 years since the Union of Bessarabia with Romania and quoted by the MOLDOVA PRESS. "This implies normal and peaceful relations, of good neighborliness with all our neighbors, including Ukraine, with Russia, which will further be a great power and which is a country with huge resources, still being one of our greatest neighbors with which we are interested to grow normal relations. Moreover, it is natural that relations would develop in various fields between the Republic of Moldova and Romania", said President Iliescu.

Asked to refer on the extent to which developments in the Republic of Moldova are dependent on the economic development path in Romania, President Iliescu answered that there was a direct dependency, both countries being "linked by too many threads not only historically, sentimentally, of language, culture, being, spirituality, but also by the possibility of certain direct economic interconnections. The progress Romania registers in strengthening its democracy and in our national economic revival on new basis, in the context of the economic reform and of a transition to the market economy which are currently taking place in Romania will be a decisive factor for growing our direct relations and support for furthering the same processes in the Republic of Moldova too", said Ion Iliescu.

Melescanu Receives Chinese Consular Delegation

AU2903123593 Bucharest Radio Romania Network in Romanian 1000 GMT 29 Mar 93

[Text] Romanian Foreign Affairs Minister Teodor Melescanu today received a Chinese delegation led by the director of the Consular Direction of the Foreign Affairs ministry of the People's Republic of China, (Zhi Lide). The Chinese delegation is in Bucharest to attend consultations between the consular directions of the two foreign affairs ministries.

According to our reporter, Doina Saiciuc, the Romanian foreign affairs minister highlighted, during today's talks, that Romanian-Chinese consular relations reflect the positive general climate of bilateral relations. The Chinese side reasserted its willingness to develop relations with Romania in every respect and emphasized the fact that they are looking forward to the opening of the Romanian consulate in Shanghai. The Romanian side also expressed its readiness to develop relations at every level, including those between [Romanian] counties and [Chinese] provinces.

Negritoiu, Attali Praise 'Constructive' Talks

AU2603142093 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1201 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] Bucharest ROMPRES, 26/3/1993—"I am very glad I have had the opportunity to meet President Iliescu yesterday and government representatives this morning in order to discuss the situation in Romania to which we are very engaged to invest and assist, so that your country may accomplish its projects in infrastructure, in environment protection and in speeding up the process of industrial restructuring and privatization", said Jacques Attali, president of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development [EBRD], now heading an EBRD delegation on a Bucharest visit, after his meeting with state ministers Misu Negritoiu, chairman of the Council for Economic Coordination, Strategy and Reform, and Florin Georgescu, minister of finance. "Industrial restructuring and privatization are the conditions for the development of the small and medium enterprises that should generate new jobs which Romania needs so much," said Attali, adding that "in this respect we discussed new projects that should allow for speeding up the restructuring processes."

In turn, Minister of State Misu Negritoiu said: "It was a very constructive meeting, during which we discussed the ever more important role the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development is to play, especially in restructuring the Romanian industry. We have discussed restructuring projects in which the European Bank will participate, pursuing especially the infrastructure and environmental protection. The very good news which President Jacques Attali has brought is that the interest rate on financing the projects in Romania will be cut down starting next week, which will encourage the investors both in public investments and in private ones. We will benefit the same treatment of all countries in central and Eastern Europe."

Foreign Minister Views Bilateral Relations

AU2503165693 Bucharest ROMANIAI MAGYAR SZO in Hungarian 18 Mar 93 pp 1,2

[Interview with Romanian Foreign Minister Teodor Melescanu by Laszlo Szekely; place and date not given: "Progress Is a Mutual Interest—Exclusive Interview With Foreign Minister Teodor Melescanu"]

[Text] As we have already announced, our information from confidential diplomatic sources turned out to be correct: The Hungarian and Romanian foreign ministers will meet in Gyula on 20 March. Both sides pointed out that the meeting would not have an official character. However, both the Romanian and Hungarian foreign ministry spokesmen also said that the two foreign ministers would make use of the opportunity to review the most urgent problems of bilateral relations; obviously, the issue of the basic treaty will occupy a central place among the issues to be discussed.

Our newspaper has kept the readers informed about the negotiations on the Romanian-Hungarian basic treaty, negotiations that have often made great waves in Romania. What is the opinion of the Romanian foreign minister himself, the most competent person to discuss this issue?

The following interview with State Secretary and Foreign Minister Teodor Melescanu took place prior to the announcement of the meeting in Gyula.

[Szekely] When I prepared a lengthy interview with you in December 1992, you said that, through this interview, you were sending a message to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry. I think that the events that have taken place in the area of bilateral relations clearly show that your message has made it to Budapest.

[Melescanu] We indeed noticed the feedback. A series of things happened that cannot be explained by a mere coincidence. Your newspaper has proved that it is serving the cause of rapprochement between the peoples of the two countries with specific actions, rather than only words. I think that your newspapers had a positive effect on events and, therefore, you deserve praise for this.

[Szekely] Thank you for the praise. It has become a tradition in our foreign political reports to ask the opinion of both sides in connection with some important moments in bilateral relations and leave the readers to draw their own conclusions. This is how we acted when the two countries' foreign ministry experts reviewed the whole of Hungarian-Romanian relations, and mainly the two unsolved problems of the basic treaty, at the end of January. Some time has passed since then and one can have a better view of the results of those talks. What is the opinion of the foreign minister himself about the results of the experts's exchange of views?

[Melescanu] If I wanted to avoid the possible traps deriving from an open and direct answer to this question, diplomatically I would say that the very fact that experts from the two foreign ministries sat down and held an exchange of views in a cordial and open atmosphere is already an achievement. In addition to this, however, one could see that both sides sincerely desired progress, because this is in their mutual interest. As foreign minister, this was the major signal for me.

I do not want now to analyze in detail everything that has contributed to this obvious desire, from the role of journalists who affect the public mood to the fact that, compared with previous times, the Romanian diplomats were better prepared for the talks.

I would also risk declaring that it seems that both sides better realized that both countries were situated in an explosive geographical region. Guaranteeing the stability of this region, something that both Romania and Hungary could greatly contribute to through their mutual efforts, is an important task, and everything else seems to be less important in comparison. However, by this, I do not want to underestimate the unsolved problems of Romanian-Hungarian relations, or underestimate their importance.

I have already said that the Romanian side prepared for the talks more thoroughly and attentively. The fact that, prior to this, we held talks with the leadership of the Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania [RMDSZ-UDMR in Romanian] also contributed to this.

[Szekely] What is the importance of the consultations with the RMDSZ leaders?

[Melescanu] We understood the RMDSZ position better, namely the position of the representatives of a considerable percentage of Romania's population regarding Romanian-Hungarian relations and the basic treaty. We think that the RMDSZ could play an important role in improving and expanding bilateral relations. Along with other political forces, the RMDSZ could also play a considerable role in other areas too, such as Romania joining European structures and obtaining the most-favored-nation status. Hopefully, we will be able to preserve a dialogue. I am happy to see outstanding figures among the RMDSZ leaders, such as Gyorgy Frunda, who is one of the most prestigious lawyers in the country and whom I myself highly respect.

[Szekely] In your opinion, how can we eliminate the differences of views on the issue of the basic treaty?

[Melescanu] I would not call them differences of views, but rather a different approach to certain issues. At most, there are very slight differences in tone. There is one way to bring the positions closer, namely to continue the negotiations, and both sides agreed on this in principle.

In conclusion, I would like to stress our readiness to find solutions acceptable to both sides.

Melescanu Returns From Italy, Reviews Visit

AU2703164893 Bucharest Radio Romania Network in Romanian 2000 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] Foreign Minister Teodor Melescanu returned home this afternoon from his official visit in Italy.

Upon his arrival Melescanu made a statement to our reporters, saying that all his meetings with Italian officials convey an important message: They deeply understand Romania, appreciate the progress made by the Romanian people with respect to the democratization of political life and the construction of a market economy. All Italian authorities, regardless of their political orientation, are firmly determined to support that process in Romania, Melescanu added.

Melescanu said that Italy's main interest in Romania is stemming from the traditionally good relations between the two countries and from the important projects built in Romania equipped with Italian machinery, as Italian companies are extremely interested in the modernization of that equipment.

One of the major issues discussed was Romanian cooperation with Western agencies, especially with the WEU and the Council of Europe, Melescanu concluded.

Italian Delegation Holds Talks on Export Issues

AU2703161493 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1815 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] Bucharest ROMPRES, 26/3/1993—An Italian delegation, including representatives of the Italian Government—the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Defense—met Friday, March 26, in Bucharest, with Dinu Marcel, secretary of state at the Romanian Foreign Ministry. Issues were tackled related to the monitoring of strategic products and technologies, in conformity with COCOM [Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Control] standards. Ways of cooperation between the two countries were examined.

This visit is part of a process of promotion of partnership relations between Romania and the COCOM countries for the relaxation and finally the lifting of restrictions on the exports of advanced strategic products and technologies.

British Officers Visit Tirgu Mures Garrison

AU2703155593 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1601 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] Bucharest ROMPRES, 26/33/1993—A team of British officers paid a fact-finding visit to a military unit of the Tirgu Mures garrison, Thursday, 25 March.

A communique of the press office of the Army mentioned that the visit, organised according to a document signed in Vienna in 1992, stipulating measures to strengthen trust and security in Europe, was aimed at checking up the truth of the military data circulated by Romania to the other CSCE states.

Army Denies Defense Minister Wishes To Resign

AU2703161393 Bucharest Radio Romania Network in Romanian 1800 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] With respect to allegations circulated by the 26 March issue of EVENIMENTUL ZILEI, according to which Defense Minister Lieutenant-General Niculae Spiroiu stated that he is ready to resign, the press bureau of the Romanian Armed Forces issued the following statement:

Lieutenant-General Niculae Spiroiu has never asserted, under any circumstances, that he has such intentions. This report, as well as the explanations attached to it, are mere groundless speculation, concludes the statement.

Defense Minister Departs for Brussels Meeting

AU2803160293 Bucharest Radio Romania Network in Romanian 1000 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] Defense Minister Niculae Spiroiu left this morning for Brussels, where he will participate in the meeting of defense ministers of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council member countries.

In a statement made before departure, Spiroiu said that the meeting will examine the status and prospects for cooperation in defense and adopt a joint statement.

Spiroiu will present the view of the Romanian Army in connection with the way in which cooperation has been carried out and the extent to which those activities have contributed to the process of restructuring, reorganization, and modernization of the Army. He will also discuss the Army's readiness to continue this cooperation on the basis of Romanian foreign policy, with a view to making a contribution to handling crises and strengthening stability in Romania.

Vacaroiu Visits Jiu Valley Mines, Hunedoara

AU2703161693 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1832 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] Bucharest ROMPRES, 26/3/1993—Premier Nicolae Vacaroiu, on a country tour now, visited Friday, March 26, a number of localities of the Jiu Valley coalfields. The premier examined, together with local decision-makers, issues regarding the coal production, the investments called for by this sector, and social welfare aspects of the reform strategy. Premier Vacaroiu made a visit on Friday to the industrial platform of the town of Hunedoara, well-known for its steel processing combine. Several variants were tackled with decision-makers and employees of the said plant, aimed to increase and diversify production. Social welfare issues during the reform were also discussed.

Vacaroiu in Sibiu, Discusses Economic Reform

AU2903055693 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1815 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Text] Bucharest, ROMPRES, 27/3/1993—On a current fact-finding trip in Sibiu, Premier Nicolae Vacaroiu made on Saturday [27 March] morning an extensive expose at the University of Sibiu on the social and economic reform strategy promoted by the current government insisting on certain stages of great importance and on mechanisms activating them: industrial restructuring and adjustment of the Romanian economy to needs of a free market, financial sources of the reform, recapitalistation of profit-making commercial companies, programs for micro-economic privatisation, creation in Romania of a real free market, the system of prices, phenomena which speed-up or curb transition. Mr. Vacaroiu enumerated a series of draft laws that the executive advanced to parliament and which are to improve economic and social reform and extensively presented the programme of social protection which is to support reform.

The Sibiu Municipality was the last stop in a fact-finding trip started by Romania's premier on Thursday [25 March] morning, in the counties of Gorj, Dolj, Hunedoara and Sibiu.

Reviews Economic Priorities

AU2903060493 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1336 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] Bucharest, ROMPRES, 28/3/1993—Before leaving the town of Sibiu (Central Romania), the last stage of his three-day fact-finding visit to four Romanian counties, Romanian Premier Nicolae Vacaroiu made some comments on that visit for the benefit of the press.

He informed that together with his team he had had contacts with a number of commercial companies, representatives of the employers and trade-unions and had analyzed together with them, in an open dialogue, many difficult problems related to production relaunching, ensuring contracts that would stimulate commercial companies, social protection, especially in fields like mining, steel works and machine building, matters he had learned directly from the realities found in the counties and that would be entered on the government's priorities agenda and discussed in the first government meeting.

For instance, the premier said, the government will support the commercial companies with respect to the conclusion of export contracts and commercial exchanges.

Answering questions from the journalists, Premier Vacaroiu gave information and news about a series of very important actions to be started soon: implementation of the managerial contract, implementation of the government's special programme to fight corruption and fiscal evasion, improvement of the labor law with a view to strengthening labor discipline, opening foreign credit lines amounting to several tens of millions U.S. dollars, supplementing the credit funds for the farmers' buying of tractors.

Napoleon Pop Discusses EC Association Accord

AU2703203593 Bucharest CURIERUL NATIONAL in Romanian 22 Mar 93

[First part of interview with Napoleon Pop, state secretary and head of the Department for European Integration, by Eugen-Ovidiu Chirovici; place and date not given: "The Ten Commandments of European Integration"]

[Text] [Chirovici] Mr. Pop, which 10 commandments of our European economic integration would you recommend to managers in Romania?

[Pop] If you wish to call them commandments, the first one is: Managers should know the stipulations of the Association Accord (the European Accord) because that accord has been conceived especially for them. While doing so, managers should rely on a minimum knowledge of commercial policies in order to be able to discover what is advantageous for them. Such advantages are: Certain preferential customs duties and the fact that the access of Romanian products to west European markets has been made easier from the quantitative point of view as well. However, it is quite obvious that if Romanian companies wish to really profit from the accord, they have to come up with offers that meet the demands of their foreign partners and they have to know how to profit from the flexibility offered by the accord.

[Chirovici] This means that they have to obtain exact information concerning foreign demand.

[Pop] One learns about foreign demand by having marketing studies done. One cannot do without such studies nowadays. I would like to emphasize the fact that the accord is not a mere act, but rather an economic instrument, one of the most important instruments of our [economic] restructuring. We cannot have any restructuring without solid guidelines. The accord is offering us one. For instance: Preferential customs duties actually offer advantageous prices to foreign importers, because the duties, which are always paid by the buyers, increase the price of the product. Every manager knows that one should profit from such advantages. This will stimulate our commercial exchanges with west European countries (and implicitly stimulating our exports), make us strive to adjust to Western quality standards, and so on. Similarly, the accord also boosts our production, because more exports mean more foreign orders, which make it necessary to increase production.

[Chirovici] I suppose we will also have to change our quality standards, because during the previous decades we merely had to comply with CEMA "exigency."

[Pop] That is absolutely right. The times of "like it or not, that is what you get" are over! The accord is operating in a selective way, on the basis of supply and demand, and therefore it also offers clear-cut criteria with respect to our macro-economic restructuring.

[Chirovici] Will our economy be able to resist such tough competition?

[Pop] We have no other choice. Our choice in favor of Europe is final and that means we have to integrate. The system which we are advancing toward demands a certain kind of discipline which is not dictated by the infamous "five-year-plans," but rather by the market. Just look around: A great number of countries are developing within that European framework, whereas the Romanian economy, which was run autocratically during the years of dictatorship, has been completely ruined. Competition and not autarchy is the solution for a better life. Naturally, we will not introduce competition abruptly, but rather over a "grace" period during which we will profit from protectionist mechanisms, such as subsidizing certain products, lower customs taxes, and so on. We will have to prepare for full integration, which means competition, but we should not be afraid of that. Romania is a rich country and we will have to learn that we should not compare ourselves to Third World countries but rather to our European partners.

Interview Concluded

AU2703203693 Bucharest CURIERUL NATIONAL in Romanian 23 Mar 93 pp 1, 3

[Second and final part of interview with Napoleon Pop, state secretary, head of the Department for European Integration, by Eugen-Ovidiu Chirovici; place and date not given: "The Ten Commandments of European Integration]

[Text] [Chirovici] We finished the first part of our conversation by talking about the problems raised by growing competition after our [European] integration. You were saying that development is generated by competition alone.

[Pop] Of course. He who fears integration has no idea of the world he is living in. During our negotiations we applied the principle of non-symmetry, in the sense that in the beginning the more developed partner (EEC) is to grant more concessions to the less developed one [Romania]. For instance, as soon as the accord is ratified, the EEC will immediately eliminate all quantitative restrictions and abolish customs taxes applied to imports of over 90 percent of Romanian industrial products, except for textiles and iron and steel products. This is a major advantage.

[Chirovici] Were the two sectors you just mentioned disputed issues during the negotiations?

[Pop] Concerning those two sectors, the EEC is scheduled to eliminate customs duties within six years. Yes, one could say that those sectors were disputed issues during our negotiations.

[Chirovici] What concessions is Romania offering related to its customs policy?

[Pop] Romania pledged to begin gradually reducing customs duties imposed on the import of about 70 percent of the industrial products from EEC countries over a period of five to nine years. In the case of most of those products the reduction of taxes is to begin in the fourth year after the accord becomes effective. We also agreed that Romania be allowed to continue supporting certain branches of its industry, including by means of subsidies, over a period of five to ten years.

[Chirovici] Is the accord stimulating foreign investments? For Romania, such investments are top priority.

[Pop] One of the important chapters of the accord is dealing with the rights that ought to be granted to companies and citizens who wish to engage in economic activity on the other partner's territory (non-discriminating treatment.) It is quite obvious that the mere existence of the accord will be regarded as a very important guarantee by all potential foreign investors. And I mean serious investors.

[Chirovici] The interim [provisional] accord will become effective as of the month of May. What does that mean?

[Pop] It means that the European accord on commercial cooperation will become effective, and this implies a great deal of things: It means the immediate amelioration of the institutional structures, the professional training of certain public servants, the preparation of the customs system, and the briefing of the economic companies on the advantages offered by the free circulation of goods.

Roman Worries About 'Restoration' in Russia

AU2703190193 Bucharest TINERETUL LIBER in Romanian 24 Mar 93 pp 1, 3

[Interview with Petre Roman, president of the National Salvation Front, by Aurel Perva; place and date not given: "With Petre Roman on Events in Russia and Their Possible Consequences for Romania"]

[Perva] Mr. Roman, I would like to begin with a question about the most topical subject right now, namely the events in Russia. What consequences might a possible victory of the conservative and imperial forces there have for Romania?

[Roman] First of all, I have always believed—something which is not at all uncommon—that any politician in Romania must be aware of the economic, political, and social situation in Russia, because it is obvious that anything happening there might have repercussions for Romania. Of course, I cannot forget the 19 August 1991 moment, which, despite the fact that it was rather expected, still took me by surprise when it actually happened. I was visiting Escorial [Spain] where I was scheduled to give a news conference. At 0600 they woke me up to tell me that a coup had taken place in Moscow. At 1100 when the conference was to begin, I was told that since I was the only important political figure from the East who was present, there was going to be huge media interest in what I had to say. Well, my position now is the same as the one expressed then. It basically relates to what Romania and the people who lead the country at a given time must do when Russia is going through periods of turmoil that can endanger current and future Romanian national and historical interests. Can Romania continue on its course, as it wishes, if things are happening in Russia that run counter to what Romania and its political forces want to do? Of course, the answer we would all like is "yes," Romania should go on doing what it wants to do, even if events in Russia are moving in the other direction. The answer is not so equivocal or simple however. I will give you a few examples. The first refers to the latent dispute over the 14th Russian Army [stationed in the Dniester region, Moldova] and its actions, that is the relative independence in behavior and attitude—a serious and inadmissible situation—of the people who run the 14th Army and of the 14th Army commander in particular vis-a-vis the central government in Moscow. Whether this independence is real or make-believe, I cannot say. Then there is the objective and historical need for Romania to reach an understanding with Ukraine, although the problems raised by the partition enforced by Stalin in 1948 remain largely unaddressed. Everyone knows that the part of Romania that was incorporated in the Soviet Union in the wake of the 1940 ultimatum was subjected to partition in 1948, something which creates so many difficulties today. No one talks about this partition. The Romanian press has mentioned it a little. Why just a little, I do not know. This partition was conceived as such by Stalin, along imperialistic lines: to take over two important territories, namely North Bukovina and Bugeac, and add to it this Dniester buffer, which indeed had very many purely Moldovan villages. I have just read a book published by Simionescu, the well-known Professor Simionescu, in 1937 titled "Our Country," which makes concrete reference to the Dniester region and these localities which he calls "purely Moldovan"—I hope no one interprets this as ethnic cleansing.

Let us return to our starting point and let us mark this as a second example the Romania's complicated relationship with its eastern neighbors. Third comes the objective need for Romania to establish partnership relations with Russia, since Romania can and must have strong economic interests in Russia. Our inability to preserve these relations after the revolution in an intelligent and mutually acceptable way has damaged both our and their interests. Even today, there are things very hard to comprehend, if not totally incomprehensible. For instance, Romania used to export drilling platforms and canned food to Russia, products that Russia still needs very much today. It is pretty easy to export these things to Russia and receive—for example—methane gas or oil in return, by using the same export system still functioning in Russia today and which continues to operate toward the West.

Therefore, all these factors should be taken into account whenever we consider our position toward what is happening in Russia. Romania's position may have looked hesitant and vacillating at times. This should not happen again. Therefore, I took a first step in connection with the events in Russia. Anyway, we can only hope that a democratic state of law is established in Russia because this is the way to ensure, as far as possible, that imperialist trends die down there.

[Perva] Let me formulate my question: What consequences might a victory of the conservatives have? Should we still recall those blacklists mentioned at the time of the Moscow coup?

[Roman] Yes. At the time of the coup, we can sadly recall that some who had made up the former party, bureaucratic, and other apparatuses and who have a vested interest in a conservative system rejoiced almost openly in the Moscow overthrow. They are a danger to the democratic political system in Romania, a danger to the system of freedoms in Romania, and of course a danger to Romania's evolution—which I consider mandatory—back into the Western system. I believe that things must be quite clear here. In the last instance, no one but Romania and its leading political forces can decide the country's current direction. Certain geopolitical interests, so to speak, still exist, but the kind of geopolitical interests that prevailed between the two world wars no longer exist today, or at least no longer prevail. The great democratic nations are coordinating their efforts to ensure the prevalence of the democratic aspirations and path. In this respect, I believe that it is no longer the play of interests that decides what we should do or where we should go, but rather our own will. Therefore, one cannot crave a conservative restoration in Russia and move toward the West at the same time. These two things are simply incompatible. This must be quite clear to everyone. In view of the circumstances mentioned before, this also requires an intelligent and well-articulated foreign policy in keeping with the vital prerequisites of contemporary international life.

[Perva] Will there not be a few people of a certain political inclination to come forward and say: Hey, would it not be better now to have had that treaty signed with Gorbachev?

[Roman] I believe that the number of those who think like that is not necessarily small, but only a few of them would dare say it openly. We all know why they will not do that, namely, because the basic perception in our society is that it is not in our national interest to be under Russian or Soviet influence and so forth. Therefore, only a few people would come forward and openly admit to that. Of course, in the last instance, economic considerations will prevail. In other words, on what basis should a restoration of the old lies rely and how can they survive? After all, seen from an economic angle, things are very difficult and complicated. Could Russia, a Russia restored along communist lines, come to the aid of similar political forces in Romania? In the current circumstances, this is hard to believe. They have their own extremely complicated problems. But then, something else might happen. Such a restoration may led to new bipolar attitudes. The conservative forces in the West are talking about Western conservatives, who are undoubtedly democratic, but nevertheless are living, and have lived for many years, with this bipolar image of the world. This is the core of the manifestation of Western conservative attitudes—a certain nostalgia for a bipolar reality. Why? Because things were clear and stable then. The Western world has prospered very well. As for the countries that have chosen a certain path, well, this is just too bad; all the more so now, when such countries would choose to follow such a path on their own volition, not like 45 years ago when it was imposed upon them. If a government in Romania openly or covertly decides on, joins, or accepts such an alliance with and affiliation to the conservative political forces in Russia, this is simply its own business—the Western conservatives will say. The bipolar reality would thus reemerge, to a certain extent, with countries like Hungary, Poland, and Czechoslovakia [as published], which are obviously more advanced than we are in this respect—everybody knows why, namely because they have had 10-15 years of freedom ahead of us in going their own way. This is quite clear. They have managed to get out on time, while we might witness a most excruciating restoration for the Romanian nation.

[Perva] To wind up this first subject, do you think that the West's reaction is belated?

[Roman] As I have said on several other occasions in the past, I believe that the West's reaction is not so much a reaction as a policy. Policy toward the East has been weak and uncoordinated among the Western powers. In my opinion, it should be obvious by now that a new Marshall plan is necessary. In the meantime, the confidence of the people and citizens of the former communist countries has decreased enormously. That initial enthusiasm that existed at a certain time has vanished by now. It would have been more profitable for everyone concerned, primarily for the West, to facilitate a clearer and more visible start for these countries on the basis of a new kind of Marshall Plan so that the governments of those countries could be assisted in their endeavors.

FSN Urges Support for Russian Reform

AU2603162693 Bucharest AZI in Romanian 23 Mar 93 p 2

["Statement by the Executive Bureau of the National Salvation Front"]

[Text] During the working meeting that took place on 22 March, the Executive Bureau of the Steering Collegium of the National Salvation Front [FSN] discussed the current situation in Russia and approved the following statement:

1. We view the actions taken by the conservative political forces in Russia, grouped especially within the Congress of People's Deputies, as a serious threat to the democratic and economic reforms in Russia, something that gives rise to legitimate concern.

2. We believe that the preservation of neutrality by the military forces in Russia is a decisive factor for avoiding a rapid and uncontrollable deterioration of the situation.

3. As a party whose essential aims are democracy and reform, we believe that it is our duty to express our support for the efforts of the democratic forces in Russia aimed at defending and strengthening democracy

through a referendum that will permit the people to express their opinion on the continuation of the reform process.

4. It is necessary for the democratic political forces in Romania to constantly monitor and assess developments in Russia and their potential consequences for Romania. Seen from this angle, the FSN calls on all democratic forces in Romania to express a common position under these circumstances which affect our historic, current, and future national interests.

5. Romania's Government and president must urgently state their positions on the situation in Russia, because otherwise there is the risk of giving the impression of a Romania that hesitates, vacillates, and is incapable of clearly expressing its support for democracy and reform. In the current international situation, Romania cannot afford to hesitate or vacillate. Romania's firm support for democracy and reform has to be expressed with determination, particularly at this crossroads for the democratization process in this neighbor country.

[signed] Executive Bureau of the National Salvation Front

Iliescu's 'Silence' Noted

AU2603203693 Bucharest ROMANIA LIBERA in Romanian 24 Mar 93 p 3

[Interview with National Salvation Front Deputy Gheorghe Stancov by Marius Ghilezan; place and date not given: "President Iliescu's Silence About the Events in Moscow Is Quite Telling"]

[Text] [Ghilezan] Besides the known consequences, what is the political effect of the fact that the censure motion [against the Vacaroiu cabinet's government program] has been rejected by Parliament?

[Stancov] It allowed us to define more precisely who is supporting the government and who really belongs to the opposition. The voters could also perceive clearly which are the democratic forces and which are the conservative-nostalgic ones. The general conclusion is that we are dealing with a program that is stalling reform and which I would describe as a stagnation program. By entering the censure motion we intended to test the reaction to our request that all reminiscences of the communist regime should be eliminated. Obviously, the reaction was a furious one, similar to the attack of a pack of wolves. Everyone could see who is siding with the persons currently running the country. There is the permanent question of why they do not want to assume political responsibility [for the government program]. It is quite obvious that they have too many things to hide. The opposition requested a clear-cut answer to the issue "Quo vadis, Romania." We cannot afford to let our country perish because they do not want to assume responsibility.

[Ghilezan] After the things that happened on 19 March in Parliament, do you think that [Senator] Corneliu Vadim Tudor [Romania Mare Party president] is merely a soloist or rather a member of a choir hiding behind the stage?

[Stancov] It is quite obvious that those who are running the country are cooperating with the extremists. Even [Chamber of Deputies Chairman] Adrian Nastase himself, as FDSN [Democratic National Salvation Front] vice-president, in an interview he recently gave ZIG-ZAG magazine, admitted that they have a political agreement with those forces. At certain moments of his speech in Parliament, Corneliu Vadim Tudor could have been taken for the spokesman of the government coalition. I am terribly frightened by the idea that this coalition might fall into his hands.

[Ghilezan] How will the events in Parliament be interpreted abroad?

[Stancov] Owing to what happened on Friday and to the ideas proclaimed during that parliamentary session, Romanian society might find itself in a serious deadlock concerning its relations with the neighboring nations. The free world is certainly worried about the fact that Romanian democracy is in jeopardy.

[Ghilezan] President Ion Iliescu did not take an official position on the events in Moscow until noon yesterday [23 March). How could that be interpreted?

[Stancov] He is too much attached to the people who, like him, were trained in Moscow. Besides that, there is a certain kind of link between the aggressiveness of the Romanian extremists and that of the Russian communists. There seems to be a kind of an occult link connecting them. What other proof do you want? President Iliescu's silence about the events in Moscow is quite telling.

Nastase Political 'Winner' of Censure Motion

AU2603132093 Bucharest CURIERUL NATIONAL in Romanian 22 Mar 93 pp 2, 3

[Article by Valentin Paunescu: "Winner of the Censure Motion: Adrian Nastase"]

[Text] The week of parliamentary passions has ended with the expected results, so to say.

The Vacaroiu government and its strategic and tactical program are still standing and, if nothing totally out of the ordinary happens, it will stay put till next spring. Theoretically, this amounts to a legal and actual legitimation of the government, conferring upon it a kind of identity that the Roman and Stolojan cabinets did not have. It also means a certain amount of stability, at least for the aforementioned period, provided we get over the "phase" of subsidy cuts without shockwaves. In this respect, we from our newspaper also have reservations and would like to mention in passing that renouncing all subsidies would be as serious a mistake as taking measures to subsidize all products and services, particularly if we take into account the great difficulties faced by the less favored categories of people and the productive sectors, which are not really guilty for now being in a state of collapse.

Parliament went through a novel exercise in democracy, namely an attempt to censure the executive in the form of a motion submitted to the vote. On this occasion, fiery speeches reminiscent of the early days of this century were made, curses were exchanged, and there was even an assault on the presidium, which led to a forced break in the debate. Given the jostling around the rostrum, all that was needed were several slaps in the face and punches to further sanction, as the enthusiastic televiewers would have said, our entry in Europe.

That is one way of looking at it. But then, there is a second way, too. The parliamentary discourses on the Vacaroiu program—regardless of their political color—had a predominantly political character; they ignored, deliberately or not, the basic problems under discussion, which in essence were of an economic nature. Therefore, we are still paying tribute to a mentality—the ideologization of the economy—that we all firmly reject in public, but privately still make use of.

Winner of the censure motion—at the time of drawing up the balance sheet of this unique parliamentary battle to date—is Mr. Adrian Nastase, the "man-sphinx" from the "presidium." In our opinion, the interesting thing to note is that the opposition has played an important role in conferring this preponderant role on Mr. Adrian Nastase, since it asked him to take over the running of the hostilities, thus implicitly recognizing his leadership qualities, something that is not contested by either the "moderates" or the "conservatives" in his own political grouping or in other groupings.

If we are to dwell a little longer on this aspect and think in terms of a possible political biography of Mr. Adrian Nastase, we are tempted to believe that the "moment of the censure motion" is but one stage; another one might be the "moment of the Davos international forum." Both seem to fall in premeditated succession. Nevertheless, let us leave the relevant experts to formulate all kinds of hypotheses (about who represents whom and what), connections, continuities and disruptions, options, and rejections.... Finally, these are all the "gifts" that make up the "dowry" with which a figure with obvious claims of being in the forefront is making its impact on the political scene.

Article Comments on Aim of Censure Motion

AU2603132893 Bucharest COTIDIANUL in Romanian 22 Mar 93 p 2

[Article by Raluca Stroe Brumariu: "Appearances Saved Once Again"]

[Text] As expected, the Vacaroiu government has survived the censure motion initiated by the opposition.

The voting results were foreseeable even for the parties that signed the motion.

After the elections in September, Parliament—the only segment of executive power in which, for the time being, the opposition is represented and has its say—was gradually and skillfully pushed to the periphery.

Therefore, the censure motion pursued two aims: On the one hand to make the government and the parties supporting it assume responsibility for the strategy-program presented by Vacaroiu's cabinet and on the other to demonstrate that the opposition's objections and positions have to be taken into consideration. And, last but not least, to prove that there is, nevertheless, a difference between the centers of power.

The discussions in Parliament on Friday, 19 March, were highly political even though the arguments of the opposition were mainly of an economic nature and strictly referred to the strategy.

By comparison, the Democratic National Salvation Front [FDSN], Greater Romania Party [PRM], the Socialist Labor Party [PSM], and the Romanian National Unity Party [PUNR] made concrete reference to the economic measures contained in documents. The representatives focused on and limited their attack only against the censure motion, and implicitly against the opposition, by trying to shift the emphasis away from tangible questions regarding the assumption of responsibility for the program.

The tone of the attacks in Parliament against the censure motion had been set the previous evening by President Iliescu himself during the "Current Events" broadcast, which selected a passage from an interview granted by the president to Cluj television (when this passage was "cited" by the national network, the interview had not yet been broadcast by Cluj television). In that passage, Mr. Iliescu criticized one point in the censure motion, namely the one on ethnic minorities. Consequently, the speeches of the parliamentarians who support the government were also spiced with nationalist-populist elements in imitation of the president's answer.

The disturbance began with Cornel Vadim Tudor's speech, whose aim it was to annihilate the effect and impact of the arguments put forward by the opposition in support of the motion.

However, it is clear that, regardless of the soundness of these arguments, since it was a political clash with more than one significance, the motion had no chance to pass. The gain could be that it makes the Vacaroiu government not only assume responsibility for the program, but also strictly abide by it (in accordance with the Constitution). The dice have been cast.

The economic measures in the government strategy will soon give rise to social dissatisfaction with which the executive power has to cope.

From now on, responsibility for what is going to happen will continue to rest exclusively on its shoulders. The opposition has made its point. The speeches by its representatives were not really aimed at persuading political opponents, who—as experience has proved—turn a deaf ear to proposals from the opposition, but rather directed at the disoriented and disappointed electorate.

The censure motion was a democratic move that may have benefited the executive power rather than the opposition for the time being, because, meanwhile, it has been proved, hasn't it, that democracy exists in Romania and it is also respected.

It was not just idle talk when the representatives of the parliamentary majority emphasized that this is the first time, after 60 years, that a censure motion has been initiated in Romania.

Appearances have been saved once again.

Marko: Nation-State Inconsistent With Diversity

AU2603132493 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1035 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] Bucharest, ROMPRES 26/3/1993—"There is a contradiction of interests as regards our targets vis-a-vis a mind relying on the outlook of nation-state, an outlook that would rule out the existence of several cultures, several languages inside the same society," told daily AZI Bela Marko, president of the Hungarian Democratic Union of Romania [UDMR].

The UDMR leader highlights that the political formation he leads "sees the minorities' rights in close connection with the classical outlook of human rights but, at the same time it considers that "the minorities' rights must go beyond the area of individual rights, as they have a collective character, as long as it is about a community that has special claims in the domains of culture, education, etc." As regards Romania's Constitution, the UDMR leader assesses, "it sanctions the right of the persons belonging to national minorities to preservation and development of their identities but, at the same time, it conceives Romania as a nation-state, hence as a state of only one nation with only one official language."

Bela Marko made a point of stressing that "the UDMR program includes also the idea of autonomy of the Hungarian community in Romania in a great many domains that are specific and regard the internal life, the traditions of this community, primarily in education and culture."

UDMR Elects Deputies Council Standing Committee

AU2803195193 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1512 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] Bucharest, ROMPRES, 28/3/1993—Saturday, March 27 in the town of Oradea (Western Romania) the proceedings of the meeting of the UDMR (Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania) Unional Deputies' Council ended late in the night. The Unional Deputies' Council is that political party's supreme decisional forum. Attending were UDMR senators and deputies, heads of the county organizations, local counselors.

An important item on the agenda was election of the council's Standing Committee, made up of a chairman, three deputy chairmen and three secretaries.

Following elections, Tamas Csiha was appointed chairman, Imre Borbely, Kalman Cziszter, and Gabor Kolumban were appointed vice chairmen, Laszlo Bujovski, Tibor Toro and Geza Borsos were appointed secretaries.

The meeting also adopted a document that reads inter alia: "UDMR has drawn the attention of the Romanian and foreign public opinion to the fact that a discriminating policy was being carried concerning the Hungarians of Romania. (...) in appointing heads of public institutions the ethnic percentage is disregarded. (...) an eloquent example of this policy is the case of the Harghita and Covasna Counties (Central Romania) where the Hungarian ethnics account for 84.6 and 75.2 percent of the population respectively and where the Hungarian prefects have recently been discharged and replaced with Romanian nationals, which practically amounts to ethnic purification of those institutions."

"UDMR, as the representative of the Hungarians of Romania," the document concludes, "will reserve the right to make use of the various forms of protest against those measures and is solid with the Hungarians in those two counties."

UDMR Meeting, Tokes Statements Viewed

AU2803161393 Bucharest Radio Romania Network in Romanian 1000 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] In an interview with our correspondent, Bela Marko, president of the Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania [UDMR], discussed that the meeting of the UDMR Council of Representatives that has been going on for two days in Oradea. He said that the measures the meeting has adopted represent the end of the first phase of establishing the new structures of the group as decided by the Brasov congress, which will ensure the continuous operation of the organization under the most satisfactory conditions.

In connection with the decision of the government to appoint ethnic Romanians to the position of prefect in Harghita and Covasna Counties, where the majority population is ethnic Hungarian, the Council of Representatives, the leadership forum of the UDMR, adopted a statement. The statement includes a very firm protest, taking into consideration the principle that at the helm of communities there should be people who know the language, traditions, and the culture of the respective community. Moreover, prefects should transmit not only the measures of the government to the provinces, but they should also inform the government about all local problems that may crop up.

Asked by our correspondent if there is an official UDMR position in connection with the statements made recently by Bishop Laszlo Tokes in the United States and Hungary, Marko said that all facts in the statements have been examined, and while they, quote, are true, they also need profound documentation. Likewise, the situation of minority groups in Romania should also be examined before the Romanian people, and one should not limit oneself to discussing only expressions and terms, unquote.

The meeting of the Council of Representatives was planning to complete a document on this issue, which, as our correspondent reported, could not be adopted because several delegates left the meeting and dissolving the quorum. A statement will be issued later.

Drop in Abortions, Slight Rise in Births Viewed

AU2603172093 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1356 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] Bucharest ROMPRES, 26/3/1993—The merely 483,860 abortions recorded in 1992 as against 622,658 in 1991 makes Health Secretary of State Traian Ionescu deem that what he called "the spate of embryocide [killing of unborn children]" that seized the Romanian female population after the December 1989 revolution (when a Ceausescu edict banning abortion was abolished—editor's note) is now subsiding. Ionescu's opinion, carried by daily DIMINEATA, is sustained by the fact that the drop to almost a half of terminations of pregnancy has been paralleled by a slight growth of births from 242,898 in 1991 to 255,550 in 1992.

Ionescu admits that birth rate with Romanians is no longer what it used to be. Quoting studies conducted by reputed Romanian demographers, like George Retegan, and, closer to our times, Vladimir Trebici, a member of the Romanian Academy, as well as to his own research work in the late 80's, Ionescu claims that in Romania, like in other states where industrialization and the reversing proportion between rural and urban settlements with the latter gaining over the former, a number of new factors altered family behavior and "modified the cultural pattern." This meant a transition from the traditional multi-nucleus family to the modern one-nucleus family largely prompted by the women's wish to assert themselves professionally.

The ideal would be that each family had at least three children. The Romanian average family has two. A positive trend is the women's choice to have children before they reach the age of 30, despite many hardships that encumber their youth. Over 86 percent of the Romanian children are born by mothers below 30, which is beneficial for the infants' health and living conditions as a whole.

The secretary of state pointed out the results of family planning actions already taken with the help of international organizations. Each county seat and all the large cities have now a center providing guidance for healthy reproduction, which includes initiation of women in how to use contraceptives, premarital advice, and health care during pregnancy. All these centers have been staffed with trained personnel and family planning specialists.

Traian Ionescu however thinks that it is hard now to expect from Romanian couples those large families with many children and many more grandchildren, although the rural areas might prove more conservative, especially in Moldova. From now on families with two or three children will be characteristic for Romania, Secretary of State for Health Traian Ionescu assesses.

UN Commanders, Bosnian Serbs Agree on Cease-Fire

Mladic, Wahlgren on Cease-Fire

AU2603202293 Belgrade RTB Television Network in Serbo-Croatian 1830 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Report on interview with General Lars-Eric Wahlgren, UN Protection Force commander, and Ratko Mladic, commander of the army of the Serbian Republic, by unidentified reporters on 26 March in Belgrade; Wahlgren speaks in English with superimposed translation in Serbo-Croatian—recorded]

[Text] As we have already reported, after more than six hours of talks the top military representatives of the UN Protection Force, led by Swedish General Lars-Eric Wahlgren, agreed on a cease-fire for all of Bosnia-Herzegovina with the army of the Serbian republic [of Bosnia-Herzegovina], led by its commander General Ratko Mladic. The cease-fire is supposed to take effect at noon on 28 March, naturally, if the other combatants agree. The army of the Serbian republic on this occasion again agreed to make certain concessions in supplying humanitarian aid to Srebrenica. It is also willing to hold talks on an absolute end of hostilities. Let us hear what General Wahlgren and General Mladic told our reporter:

[Begin recording] [Reporter, in English] Did you reach agreement, General?

[Wahlgren] I think I have to consult my notebook, as I would not like to miss anything. We agreed to hold a meeting at the highest level on 6 April at 1100 at the Sarajevo airport, which I shall chair. Naturally, the other sides also promised to participate. That is the first thing. The second is that we also agreed on a cease-fire that is to take place throughout Bosnia-Herzegovina at noon on 28 March, I repeat, at noon Sunday. All the others to accept. [sentence as heard]

We also agreed to support the convoys for Srebrenica. The convoy will leave at 0800 tomorrow. It will consist of 20 trucks loaded with food, medicine, and a lot of plastic. They will take some wounded and civilians, women and children, who want to leave this area of their own free will.

[Reporter] Mr. Mladic, could you make a statement for the second newscast, only a couple of words, on what was agreed upon?

[Mladic] Well, the general has already told you. In short, it was agreed that, first, we ourselves proposed and accepted the end of hostilities in all of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which will take effect at noon Sunday. Second, it was agreed to facilitate passage of a humanitarian aid convoy consisting of 20 trucks to Srebrenica tomorrow; and that women, children, and old people, as well as the wounded—women, children, Muslims, if there are any—will be evacuated in these trucks on the way back.

[Reporter] Could the Serbs have made more concessions than they have so far?

[Mladic] On this occasion we demonstrated again—and I hope that Mr. Wahlgren realized this after today's exhausting talks with me—that the Serbs neither ever had nor ever will wage war against an innocent civilian population. The Muslim women, children, and old people are not responsible for what Alija Izetbegovic has imposed upon them, namely, war until extermination.

[Reporter] Will there be any help for the Serbs in Tuzla?

[Mladic] We will do our best, and General Wahlgren, Mr. Thornberry, General Morillon, and Mr. Mendilluce, have promised to do everything within their power to ensure that Serbs will be treated as people from this planet. Namely, the entire world cannot concentrate on helping Alija Izetbegovic and [Croatian President] Franjo Tudjman. On the other hand, humanitarian aid is generously given to them. Nearly all the most powerful fleets of this world are engaged in providing food for them, although they have too much of it. They have blocked the Serbs from all sides. While they are giving logistical supopoort to Muslims and Croats, they are building a Chinese wall around us.

[Reporter] Do you trust them?

[Mladic] Whom?

[Reporter] Well, those generals whom you held talks with today.

[Mladic] I trust them, but they are not in a position to decide everything. The UN Security Council must start treating the Serbs as residents of this planet. Serbs, wherever we may be, have no country of our own, not even here, I must unfortunately say, in the middle of Belgrade, although this is a Serbian territory, a Serbian capital and the capital of what was recently Yugoslavia. This land, this state, and this right is denied to the Serbs. The UN Security Council acknowledged a state for the Slovenes, although there are fewer of them than there are Serbs in the former Bosnia-Herzegovina. It cannot be that some peoples are given the right to become independent by carving up a country, while others are denied a country that existed and that they wish to create.

[Reporter] Thank you, Mr. Mladic. [end recording]

Serbs Issue Statement on Talks

LD2903132193 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1117 GMT 29 Mar 93

[Text] Belgrade, 29 Mar (TANJUG)—The government of the Serb republic (in Bosnia-Herzegovina) will consider a proposed plan to deploy UN Protection Force [UNPROFOR] military observers throughout the territory of former Bosnia-Herzegovina, the office of the Serb republic Prime Minister Vladimir Lukic announced today.

In a statement issued after talks yesterday between Lukic and General Philippe Morillon, commander of the peace forces in former Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Serb republic government stressed that it has requested a written draft of the plan.

It is noted that the statement was issued "in response to some incorrect and biased interpretations of yesterday's talks".

"Gen. Morillon asked for permission to deploy a UNPROFOR unit in Srebrenica," the statement says, and goes on to add that Prime Minister Lukic, however, "left the issue open in a desire to have it considered within the framework of a global plan for deploying UNPROFOR observers throughout Bosnia-Herzegovina."

The Serb side insisted that Muslim terrorists who had killed and massacred 1,325 Serbs and burned 36 Serb villages, be disarmed. According to the statement, Morillon "endorsed the need for urgently disarming and punishing criminal groups from Srebrenica and surrounding locations."

"Gen. Morillon promised that the criminals who committed these unprecedented crimes would be taken to international courts, and asked the Serb authorities to submit lists of Srebrenica criminals," the statement says. "He guaranteed full security for the entire civilian population of the area and respect for the freedom to choose whether to stay in the area or to leave for safer regions."

The statement goes on to say that Gen. Morillon also promised to use his influence with the Muslim side to secure the implementation of an agreement he reached with Alija Izetbegovic on 8 March, which provides for free movement of civilians and under which Serbs will be allowed to leave Sarajevo, Tuzla and other towns under Muslim control.

The Serb side provided guarantees to respect the above agreement and insisted on its urgent implementation.

Talks about implementing this agreement are due to begin at Sarajevo airport today.

Sarajevo Radio: Cease-Fire Holding

AU2903110193

[Editorial Report] Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian at 1000 GMT on 29 March reports a mostly peaceful morning in the country:

The studio announcer reports "drastically reduced intensity of combat" in Doboj, Tesanj, and Zavidovici communes. The correspondent from Bihac reports "only sporadic infantry provocations" in the Grabez area. The Seven-South operational group of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army reports that "the morning is perfectly quiet," with the exception of the regrouping of "enemy troops" near Novi Seher, Putnikovo Brdo and at the mouth of the river Usora. "The cease-fire is being observed in the Gorazde area" the report from this region says, but adds that "regrouping of chetniks in the vicinity of Foca, Cajnice, Visegrad and Rogatica has been noted." The Tuzla correspondent says the region "was peaceful this morning," and reports "chetnik infantry provocations" took place in Majevica battlefield last night. The correspondent from Capljina reports that "last night and this morning passed without any major incidents in the area." Correspondent Irfan Calo says the situation in Sarajevo "continues to be completely quiet, practically without any activities from the aggressor."

Cease-Fire Violations Reported

AU2903091693 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 0800 GMT 29 Mar 93

[Text] It is evident that this, who knows what cease-fire in a row, is merely a dead letter on the paper on Turbe battlefield. Namely, a mortar bomb was fired from Potkraj at Turbe at 1500 yesterday while there was frequent activity by infantry arms in chetnik positions at Vocnjak and Djulilovac. SKY NEWS reporters witnessed just how the cease-fire was being observed.

Throughout the night the chetnik troops were opening infantry, antiaircraft machine gun, and antiaircraft gun fire. This morning is passing to the sound of similar music.

The defenders of Turbe have long stopped believing the sweet promises of the chetnik leaders and are readily meeting all the aggressor's provocations.

This was the press service of the Travnik army reporting [as heard] for Sarajevo Radio.

Serbs Report Violations

LD2903133093 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1243 GMT 29 Mar 93

[Text] Belgrade, March 29 (TANJUG)—Two Serb fighters were killed and another four wounded when Moslem and Croat forces violated the cease-fire on some of the battlefronts in the war-battered former Yugoslav Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Bosnian Serb army command said in a statement on Monday [29 March].

The cease-fire, agreed by the three warring sides in Bosnia-Herzegovina, went into effect at noon on Sunday. The statement says that the command has strongly protested with the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) command for Bosnia-Herzegovina in Kiseljak and the command for the whole of former Yugoslavia in Zagreb, demanding that the respect of the cease-fire be also secured on the other two sides.

The Bosnian Serb army command says that its units are fully respecting the latest cease-fire agreement. The statement lists a number of cease-fire violations, the first of which was reported on Sunday afternoon, when Moslem forces opened fire from antiaircraft machine-guns in the area of Doboj. It also mentions mortar fire on Serb positions from the Sarajevo suburb of Dobrinja and sniper fire on the Serb-controlled suburbs of Grbavica, Vogosce and Hadzici.

Bosnian Croat forces on Sunday evening fired from 120-mm mortars and machine-guns on advanced posts of the Serb Army from the village of Drenovac in the area of Stolac, Herzegovina, says the statement.

From the region of Srebrenica, eastern Bosnia, fire was opened on Serb positions in the village of Karadzici from Ljeskovik and Majorov Grob, says the command.

Cease-Fire Violated in Tuzla

AU2803154193 Paris AFP in English 1451 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] Tuzla, Bosnia-Herzegovina, March 28 (AFP)—Two U.N. helicopters were slightly damaged Sunday [28 March] in Serb shelling on the Tuzla airfield just minutes after the cease-fire negotiated by U.N. Bosnia commander Philippe Morillon came into effect, British military sources said.

No one was wounded in the shelling, which occurred at 12:15 p.m. (1015 GMT), and the helicopters, a British Sea King and a French Puma, were still able to fly, the sources said.

The ceasefire, negotiated Friday in Belgrade, came into force over the whole of Bosnia-Herzegovina at midday.

The British command decided that its three Sea Kings were no longer safe in this Moslem town in eastern Bosnia, and flew them back to their original base at Kiseljak, 20 kilometers (12 miles) west of Sarajevo.

The French command decided to leave their aircraft here.

Early Sunday British military sources said the operation to evacuate the wounded from the besieged Moslem enclave of Srebrenica would resume Monday if weather conditions improved after three days of snow in the area around Tuzla.

The British helicopters would operate from Kiseljak, the sources said.

Army To Respect Cease-Fire

LD2803212993 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 2000 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] In reaction to an announced cease-fire in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which was due to come into force at noon today, the office of the general staff of the Bosnia-Herzegovina armed forces supreme command has announced that as on many previous occasions, the army of Bosnia-Herzegovina will respect the cease-fire. Our fighters will not open fire first, but any attempt at taking advantage of the cease-fire on the part of the aggressor will be met with military measures and will not be tolerated.

At the same time, the public and our fighters are warned that the chetnik side will undoubtedly use this cease-fire too to recover from a heavy military defeat over the last few days. Under the guise of halting military activity, they will try to use the cease-fire to regroup and bring reinforcements, to consolidate their attacking positions, and to await an improvement in weather conditions and new equipment to continue their aggression.

Commentator on Serb Motives

LD2803165693 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 0705 GMT 28 Mar 993

[Commentary by Senad Avdic, editor of Free Bosnia magazine—from the "Dezurni Mikrofon" political weekly program]

[Text] The latest of nearly 20 cease-fires signed over the last year by the chetnik commander Ratko Mladic comes after the fiercest offensive ever launched by his murdering machine. It can also be said that Mladic signed the cease-fire after the heaviest defeat and military collapse suffered by the chetniks since the beginning of tha war on the territory of former Yugoslavia. [passage indistinct]

At the beginning of March, the chetniks warned foreign journalists leaving Sarajevo to wait a little longer because in about 10 days Sarajevo would fall. Foreign journalists leaving Sarajevo reported huge chetnik forces moving toward Kobiljaca, Ilidza, and Rajlovac. Chetniks launched their attack on the western part of Sarajevo, i.e. Stup and the Stup highway intersection, which they regard as the key for entering Sarajevo, with an offensive against the Sokolje hill. Over the past month Bosnia-Herzegovina army members have made effetive use of this hill to neutralize the enemy's armored forces attacking toward Azici and Stup. It should be remembered that the December attack on Otes was preceded by a chetnik offensive against Sokolje hill.

This time round, the chetnik armored units were routed and some 50 chetniks were killed in infantry clashes. At the same time chetniks attacked Kotorac and even had some temporary successes. However, a fierce counteroffensive by our army again wiped out dozens of chetniks and several armored vehicles. The Kotorac lines were pushed forward in our favor.

Simultaneously, saboteur units of the Bosnia-Herzegovina army carried out several efficient raids in the wider area of Mount Igman. Chetniks were routed around Sarajevo, and in the city itself they suffered many casualties over the past two days. Members of special units of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Sarajevo police center killed about 20 chetniks in the airport district and liberated an important part of this occupied area without suffering any casualties themselves.

The other key parts of the chetnik offensive were the areas of Tesanj and the free Doboj municipality. Some 10 days ago Doboj was visited by Vojislav Seselj, the president of the second largest party in the Serbian Parliament. Interviewed on Radio Doboj, Seselj nervously demanded an all-out attack against the Bosnia-Herzegovina forces in Tesanj. Six chetnik brigades, five infantry and one armored, attacked the Tesanj defense lines from several directions. Pontoon bridges were installed, allowing armored vehicles to move toward the Tesanj municipality. At the same time a major infantry attack was launched from the direction of Teslic. A well-organized anti-armor unit of the Bosnia-Herzegovina army destroyed two tanks and another six tanks were abandoned by their crews. After 12 hours our soldiers had to destroy these tanks because there was no possibility of evacuating them without damage [sentence as heard].

Tesanj was brutally attacked over the past week, but the fighters from this town survived it all and pushed the defense lines forward by 4 km and extended them by the same length. The casualty toll among the chetniks was horrifying. More than 160 of Mladic's soldiers were killed in this battle and around 400 were wounded.

Maglaj was also under attack during this period. There were no important changes on the battlefield except for more chetnik casualties and wrecked tanks. At the same time a day of mourning was proclaimed in Kljuc in memory of several score chetnik soldiers born in this Bosnian town and killed by Bosnia-Herzegovina army members in recent battles on Grabez hill.

The chetniks also attacked the municipality of Visoko, but the Bosnia-Herzegovina army soldiers, above all members of units from Bosnian Krajina deployed in this area, routed the enemy forces and even seized some of the lines that were until recently held by the enemy.

The enemy offensive in the Srebrenica area has been in progress for a month. Two corps of the so-called Yugoslav Army are attacking the completely isolated area of the liberated territory. General Dusan Loncar is in command of this operation, which was prepared in the general staff of the aggressor army. This general and his Titovo Uzice Corps have been present in Bosnia for a long time, from Nevesinje to Visegrad. However, reports sent from Srebrenica by Haris Nezirovic of Free Bosnia, the only journalist to enter this heroic town beside the ABC reporter, deny predictions by foreign journalists that Srebrenica is bound to fall. Bosnia-Herzegovina army soldiers, led by the legendary Commander Naser Oric, even had the courage and the ability to liberate some areas previously captured by superior chetnik units.

This time Mladic's signature on the cease-fire agreement was intended more seriously than on any of the previous agreements. He signed after the complete military collapse of his army in an offensive which was meant to improve the aggressor's negotiating position, i.e. the occupation of a large part of the liberated territory. Mladic's military defeat last week hurts the aggressor side much more than Karazdic's diplomatic debacle in New York. Karadzic expected that Mladic would militarily ease his negotiating position. However, the Bosnia-Herzegovina army's counteroffensive destroyed Mladic's military reputation of an ardent murderer.

Whichever way you look at it, this was the worst week for the aggressor side so far.

Agreement Reached on Demilitarization of Srebrenica

AU2903095493 Belgrade Radio Beograd Network in Serbo-Croatian 0900 GMT 29 Mar 93

[Text] After his meeting with Vladimir Lukic, prime minister of the Serbian Republic [of Bosnia-Herzegovina], French General Phillipe Morillon stated that an agreement has been reached on the demilitarization of Srebrenica, which should become the first demilitarized town in the former Bosnia-Herzegovina. The deadline for the implementation of this agreement is three days, Morillon said. He also said that an attempt will soom be made to draft a similar agreement for Sarajevo.

During their meeting in Pale, Prime Minister Vladimir Lukic and UNPROFOR [Un Protection Forces] Commander Phillipe Morillon discussed the free movement of all citizens and their free departure from bigger towns. SRNA agency reports that General Morillon supported this proposal. The French general also supported a proposal by the Serbian side for a meeting at Sarajevo airport later today between the representatives of the three warring sides. The participants in the talks in Pale also discussed the even distribution of humanitarian aid and the deployment of the UN observers.

Lukic Denies Agreement Reached

LD2903124693 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1128 GMT 29 Mar 93

[Text] Pale, 29 Mar (TANJUG)—Serb Republic Prime Minister Vladimir Lukic told TANJUG today that "no agreement on demilitarizing Srebrenica was reached at a meeting yesterday with General Philippe Morillon," and that he did not believe that "Gen. Morillon could have said something like that."

"We did discuss demilitarization during our meeting yesterday, but not about Srebrenica specifically. Issues were discussed in general and no agreement was reached concerning details and time limits in particular, as Morillon allegedly said," Lukic stated.

Morillon Secures Arrest of Serb Colonel

AU2803205593 Paris AFP in English 2050 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] Sarajevo, March 28 (AFP)—U.N. Bosnia-Hercegovina commander Philippe Morillon has secured the arrest of the Serb colonel who commanded an attack on the eastern town of Srebrenica as wounded were being evacuated by helicopter, he announced Sunday.

The French general, who returned to Sarajevo after visiting the nearby Serb stronghold of Pale, described the colonel, identified by his last name Ilic, as a "brute."

He said that at his request, General Ratko Mladic, the commander of the Bosnian Serb forces, had had the colonel arrested, and that Ilic would face a court martial for having betrayed his cease-fire promises to Morillon.

Morillon, Serbs Discuss Civilian Movement

LD2903003493 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 2217 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] Belgrade, 28 Mar (TANJUG)—As reported by SRNA news agency, Dr. Vladimir Lukic, president of the government of the Serb republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and General Philippe Morillon, commander of the UN Protection Force [UNPROFOR] in former Bosnia-Herzegovina, held talks in Pale today about free movement of all citizens and the need to allow them to leave large towns unhindered. The talks also referred to balanced humanitarian aid deliveries and the deployment of UN observers.

According to the agency, Morillon expressed support for a proposal to allow all citizens to move in and out of large towns unhindered and went on to endorse a proposal put forward by the Serb side for a meeting between the warring sides at Sarajevo airport tomorrow. The agency gave no details about the proposed meeting.

According to SRNA, Morillon also voiced his support for a request by the UNHCR [Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees] urgently to draw up a plan for balanced humanitarian aid deliveries to all areas and to the entire population of former Bosnia-Herzegovina.

After the meeting Dr. Lukic said that Morillon asked the Serb side for its views on the deployment of UN observers primarily in Srebrenica. "Our advice was that representatives of the peace forces should submit a request for delpoyment to the government of the Serb republic but not just in the area of Srebrenica but also on the entire territory of former Bosnia-Herzegovina," Lukic said.

SRNA reports that the talks were also attended by the Serb republic's ministers for defense and internal affairs, Dusan Kovacevic and Ratko Adzic, respectively, as well as Viktor Andreyev, UNPROFOR head of civilian affairs in former Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Interview With Karadzic on Talks in New York

AU2603211593 Belgrade RTB Television Network in Serbo-Croatian 1830 GMT 26 Mar 93

["Excerpt" from interview with Radovan Karadzic, president of the Serbian Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, by Vesna Jugovic at the Belgrade airport on 26 March—recorded]

[Text] [Jugovic] Can we ask you what you have been thinking about on the plane for the last few hours. What is our position? What is the position of the Serbian side?

[Karadzic] We have been thinking. We have been analyzing things. Mr. Krajisnik [chairman of the assembly of the Serbian Republic], Mr. Koljevic [vice president of the Serbian Republic] and our assistants have been analyzing things in order to work out the tactics of the international community. I think that we have a fairly good idea of what they are doing.

[Jugovic] Can you tell us what your conclusion is?

[Karadzic] Not all of it. We know that they will now try with pressure and shocks, as well as concessions to the Serbian side, to satisfy the Serbian side and win its signature. I think that this will be their strategy, and we are ready for it.

[Jugovic] A strategy of hot and cold.

[Karadzic] Yes, something like that. I think that we must get a significant part of what belongs to us if they want us to sign it. With various maneuvers they managed to get a signature from the Muslims. We knew that this signature would be forthcoming, even though many people were trying to convince us to sign because the Muslims were not going to do it. After all this, they will now have to deal with the Serbs, to satisfy the Serbian side, otherwise the conference will fail.

[Jugovic] Alija Izetbegovic has signed a modified map. What was changed in the maps that Izetbegovic signed?

[Karadzic] What was changed is the Sarajevo province. Our view was that the center of the town should be the capital, while the rest of the province ought to be governed proportionately, like other provinces. When they realized that this would be a Serbian province, they added to this province, along with Kresevo and Kiseljak, Visoko, Breza, and Vares in order to make the Serbs a minority.

[Jugovic] They are altering the ethnic composition.

[Karadzic] Yes, but this will not be acceptable. They are making plans without consulting those concerned. There is nothing without our signature. Therefore, I think that this will have to be regulated.

Izetbegovic May Withdraw Signature From Plan

LD2803143393 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1300 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Report by correspondent Nada Alisa from Zagreb]

[Text] If the Bosnian Serbs do not sign the Vance-Owen plan within the next 10-15 days, Bosnia-Herzegovina Presidency President Alija Izetbegovic will withdraw his signature. President Izetbegovic stressed this at a news conference held in the embassy of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina in Zagreb.

The Vance-Owen plan is bad, but it is still the best of the solutions offered to end the war in Bosnia, Izetbegovic said, and explained that this is the main reason for his decision to sign the Vance-Owen plan. He added that he did this because both America and the United Nations promised that they will try to force the Serbs to sign the document also.

If the Serbs do not sign they are threatened with even tighter sanctions. If they sign, the Serbs will have to pull their troops out of nine Bosnia-Herzegovina municipalities completely, and partially from a further nine municipalities. That is why we have to respect some of the international demands addressed to us, President Izetbegovic explained, saying the only way to stop the aggression is by force. This is needed as soon as possible because new units are arriving from Serbia and attacking Bosnia-Herzegovina. Over the last few weeks two more enemy corps with 100 tanks and tens of thousands of soldiers arrived in Bosnia and launched an offensive. This explains the siege of Srebrenica and the fall of Cerska, Konjevic Polje, and Kamenica.

I hope, President Izetbegovic said, that my signature will get the world to implement its decisions.

Regarding his talks last night with the president of the Republic of Croatia, Izetbegovic explained diplomatically how they discussed Bosnian-Croatian relations and, in particular, ways to end the clashes between the Croatian Defense Council [HVO] and the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army. Asked directly about the content of the talks, President Izetbegovic said that it was agreed to set up the armed forces of Bosnia-Herzegovina, including both the HVO and the Bosnia- Herzegovina Army under a joint command. If we solve this problem we will solve all important disputes between Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

UNHCR Convoy 'Unexpectedly' Heads for Srebrenica

LD2803173193 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1652 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Excerpts] Zvornik, 28 Mar (TANJUG)—Shortly before 1800, a UNHCR [Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees] convoy of 19 trucks passed through Zvornik quite unexpectedly and practically unannounced. The convoy will try to reach Srebrenica along the left bank of the river Drina via Bratunac.

According to Vlado Dakic from the command of the Zvornik garrison of the army of the Serb Republic [of Bosnia-Herzegovina], who is responsible for liaison with the UN Protection Force [UNPROFOR], the convoy appeared suddenly, much later than yesterday. Despite warnings by the Serb side that it was too late to travel, the convoy leader decided to head for Srebrenica along a route through the Serb Republic as approved three days ago. [passage omitted]

According to Serb military sources, the 19-truck convoy is expected back from Srebrenica tomorrow with Muslim women and children.

The convoy could have gone to Srebrenica unhindered yesterday along the left bank of the Drina river, but Philippe Morillon, UNPROFOR commander for former Bosnia-Herzegovina, insisted on the convoy traveling through the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia or rather the Republic of Serbia. [passage omitted]

The Serb side gave permission for 20 trucks to proceed to Srebrenica, but this afternoon one truck broke down on the way to Zvornik and had to stay behind.

UN Aid Convoy Arrives in Srebrenica

AU2803192493 Paris AFP in English 1916 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] Sarajevo, March 28 [illegible] U.N. aid convoy arrived Sunday evening in the besieged Moslem town of Srebrenica in eastern Bosnia-Herzegovina, U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) spokesman Peter Kessler reported.

The convoy had been blocked over the Drina River in Serbia.

Kessler said that 19 trucks reached Srebrenica with 158 tonnes of food, medicines and plastic sheeting to repair blown-out windows and provide protection from snow and freezing temperatures for refugees living outdoors.

Serbs Leave Tuzla on UNHCR Vehicle

LD2803154593 Zagreb Radio Croatia Network in Serbo-Croatian 1500 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] A group of 46 Serbs left Tuzla today and set off on board a UN Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR] bus for the region of Bosnia-Herzegovina controlled by Serb forces, the UNHCR office in Zagreb has announced. This is the second group of Serbs to leave Tuzla in accordance with an agreement between the UNHCR and Philippe Morillon, UN Protection Force commander in Bosnia-Herzegovina on the one hand and the Tuzla authorities on the other.

Izetbegovic Gives News Conference in Zagreb

LD2703205293 Zagreb HTV Television in Serbo-Croatian 1830 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Report on news conference by Alija Izetbegovic, president of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Presidency, during a stopover at Pleso Airport in Zagreb; passages within quotation marks are recorded]

[Text] After signing the peace plan document in New York last night, together with Mate Boban, president of the Croatian community of Herzeg-Bosna, Alija Izetbegovic, president of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Presidency, made a stopover in Zagreb on his way back to Sarajevo from the United States. Izetbegovic held a short news conference at Zagreb's Pleso Airport.

[Correspondent] Of Bosnia-Herzegovina's expectations following the signing of the peace plan, President Izetbegovic says:

[Izetbegovic] "We expect the world community, international factors, to carry out their commitment both with regard to the resolutions and the UN Charter, and of course with regard to this agreement which we have. As is known, we particularly expect a great deal of the United States, which has explicitly said, as Mr. Christopher did in February, that it will do whatever is necessary for the plan to be finally implemented."

[Correspondent] Now that the peace plan has been signed, cooperation between Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia is even more important, Izetbegovic stresses.

[Izetbegovic] "I believe that the barriers to our cooperation, all the barriers to our cooperation, have been removed. Of course, things now depend, as far as our concrete cooperation is concerned, on whether the signing by the third party will take place or not. If it does not, to take the worst case scenario, I expect that we will coordinate our efforts in the struggle against our common aggressor, against the aggression...." [sentence incomplete as heard]

[Correspondent] Asked what a reasonable deadline for the Serbs to sign the peace plan would be, Alija Izetbegovic firmly replies:

[Izetbegovic] "I think that the relevant people have already given them that deadline, the relevant factors reckon that they should do it, or not do it, within eight to 10 days. As far as we are concerned they can sign or not sign whenever they want. We have made it quite clear that if they do not sign the plan within what we would call a reasonable deadline, we will consider our signature to this agreement invalid."

[Correspondent] As the main culprit for the war on the territory of the former Yugoslavia, Izetbegovic blames Serbian President Milosevic. I believe that Milosevic holds the key to war or peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina. He started it, he is waging it, and I believe that he can stop it at any time, the Bosnia-Herzegovina president said. In reply to a journalist's question on whether the Muslims have gained control of a further province—that is, whether Sarajevo has become a Muslim zone—Izetbegovic says:

[Izetbegovic] "Yes. Sarajevo has a Muslim majority, and according to the criteria, which I do not like using, but which are in a way normal, this is a Muslim province, with the proviso that we are talking about a province which will be, like all other provinces, administered by the majority according to the so-called national proportions."

[Correspondent] Alija Izetbegovic spoke of details of his talks with President Bill Clinton and Vice President Al Gore, at which he informed them of the current situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

[Izetbegovic] "I particularly stressed our expectation, our demand, our fully justified demand, that if the Serbs do not sign this agreement, we should call for the arms embargo to be lifted."

[Correspondent] The United States, Izetbegovic says, will make representations in the UN Security Council for the lifting of the embargo on arms imports to Bosnia-Herzegovina, and will continue to provide Bosnia with significant humanitarian and material support.

TANJUG Reviews U.S. 'Promises' to Izetbegovic

LD2703145193 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1428 GMT 27 Mar 93

[By Dejan Lukic]

[Text] Washington, March 27 (TANJUG)—Leader of Bosnian Moslems Alija Izetbegovic has eventually signed a peace plan for Bosnia-Herzegovina, as Washington knew days ahead that he will do it because it had reportedly given him at least seven promises in return for his signature.

It is no longer a secret that the White House promised Izetbegovic that it would consider lifting an embargo on arms deliveries to Bosnian Moslems in case he signed the papers and Bosnian Serbs failed to do the same.

The American Administration is well aware that the lifting of the embargo has to follow a delicate procedure of coordination at the United Nations, but Izetbegovic obviously has not been given the promises without its previous estimates of the possible relevant stands by France, Britain or Russia.

Another promise to Izetbegovic was the promotion of a fresh resolution by the Security Council allowing Western warplanes to down Serb aircraft over Bosnia.

By arming the Bosnian Moslem army and by silencing the aircraft of Bosnian Serbs, the U.S. Administration aims at changing the military situation on the ground in Bosnia until Serbs yielded to accepting the dictate of the great powers.

Bosnian Serbs do not accept the Vance-Owen maps drawn up to their detriment. The maps give Serbs—the second most populous nation in Bosnia-Herzegovina (32 percent of the total population)—only one-fifth of the republic's total wealth and no more than 43 percent of all its land, although the land registers show that the Serbs own 64 percent of the entire territory.

The maps leave near half the total number of Serbs in non-Serb provinces, disrupting their mutual links and their links with the parent Republic of Serbia.

Another promise to Izetbegovic was the tightening of existent sanctions and the introduction of fresh sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro. It was last May that the U.N. imposed comprehensive sanctions on the F.R. Yugoslavia (the Republics of Serbia and Montenegro) for its alleged involvement in the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The American promises next include the expulsion of Yugoslav diplomats from embassies in Europe and the U.S., the freezing of the remaining Yugoslav deposits abroad, the ousting of Yugoslavia from all international organizations, the United Nations included.

One day after he signed the papers, Izetbegovic found himself in the White House where he met with President Clinton, Vice President Al Gore and visiting German Chancellor Helmut Kohl. Their meeting passed in a very good mood as is becoming to friends and allies.

Germany, having been very active and hasty in dismembering the former Yugoslav federation, has not been ashamed of pressing its Western allies to recognize the forcibly seceded republics of ex-Yugoslavia and accordingly "endorse" the forced redrawing of borders of an internationally recognized state.

Leaving the White House, Izetbegovic looked very content, for he had apparently been assured that Clinton would stick to his promises.

What is now awaited is just the "right timing" that depends on developments in Moscow. Russian Foreign Minister Kozyrev in Washington four days ago gave a firm pledge that the Russian diplomacy would maintain its current relations with Washington.

Kozyrev only asked the Americans for "taking a little time" and not rushing the punishment of Serbia until Yeltsin was "back on his feet."

Serb Assembly To Back Referendum on Country's Future

LD2703114093 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1034 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Text] Novi Sad, 27 Mar (TANJUG)—"The Serbian people will decide their own future," Aleksa Buha, the Serbian republic's foreign minister, stated in an interview with Novi Sad's DNEVNIK daily today when discussing the unsuccessful third round of negotiations on former Bosnia-Herzegovina's future.

At its next session, the Serbian republic's assembly will adopt a decision to call a referendum in which the Serbian people will decide whether it wishes to live within provinces drawn up by Cyrus Vance and Lord Owen or to live where it has lived so far, Buha added.

The Serbian republic's foreign minister categorically rejected the idea of maps dividing Bosnia-Herzegovina into 10 provinces being signed in the present form. Buha added that the maps are unacceptable to the Serbian people, considering the Serbian delegation's proposal was rejected in New York. The proposal was to sign 70 percent of the plan and to turn the remaining 30 percent into pink zones, similar to those existing in the corner areas of Croatia, until a final solution is reached.

"The international community has promised that it will not intervene militarily in Bosnia-Herzegovina, that it will not use force to impose any solution. No agreement, whoever imposes it, can be a peace agreement if the three sides do not agree on it," Buha said.

Serb Leader Urges 'Unified State' With Krajina

LD2603181993 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1649 GMT 26 Mar 93

[All quotation marks as received]

[Text] Sarajevo, 26 Mar (TANJUG)—According to SRNA, Vladimir Lukic, prime minister of the Serb republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina's government, has stated that, taking in consideration the results of the latest stage of the New York negotiations, the Serb republic should proclaim independence and then form a unified state with the Serb republic of Krajina."

He confirmed that "all these proposals and documents will be discussed by the Serb republic's assembly, which will adopt conclusions in accordance with the interests of the Serb people."

Commenting on the decision of the Croat and the Muslim delegation to sign all three documents of the peace plan, Lukic said that this was to be expected because the Vance-Owen plan rewards those who destroy Yugoslavia."

It is obvious that the scenario was prepared a long time ago and that it is now being implemented. We have to oppose this scenario in a different way, Lukic stressed, expressing his doubt that anything could be achieved by diplomatic means because Serbs are blocked from all sides.

Lukic cited the example of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The international community is imposing new sanctions against the FRY, while on the other side the Republic of Croatia is carrying out aggression against the Serb territories in former Bosnia-Herzegovina and in Krajina.

Finally Lukic said that Serbs must be aware of the current international situation, and that they must negotiate only with their friends. "We do have friends in the world ready to help us in a certain way," he said.

Interior Ministry Names Serb War Criminals

LD2803222393 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 2000 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] The Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina has received reliable reports that around 170 Muslims were imprisoned in one military and two civilian prisons in Bileca during the period from the beginning of June until mid-December last year. These wretched people, just because they are Muslims, were exposed to horrific torture and maltreatment by demented chetnik criminals Miroslav Duka, the commander of the public security service of Bileca, and Nedjo Kuljic, Dragisa Ivkovic, and Rade Nosovic.

All these butchers were authorized by Bileca Mayor Milorad Vujovic and Public Security Station Chief Goran Vukovic to torture the prisoners, with no limit, by the worst methods of torture that the human mind can invent, such as: fracturing the nose by hammer, splitting the head by the fins of antitank missiles, giving them electric shocks, etc. One of the prisoners who succumbed to horrific injuries inflicted on him by chetnik criminal Duka and policeman Ivkovic from Trebinje was Abdic Ferhad, who was not allowed to receive medical help after being beaten by the chetniks. Miroslav Duka was the main executor in hurling prisoners Serif Basic, his son Sefik Basic, and an 18 year-old named Karajlo into a 100 meter-deep Koritska pit. The same man led a chetnik group which robbed and then slaughtered Mujo Bajramovic, his disabled mother Uma, Tajko Bajramovic, and Jasar Abdic.

The following extremists of the Serbian Democratic Party, in addition to these torturers from Bileca prisons, specially excelled in their brutality: Mladen Bjelica from the village of Bjeljine; Veso Sakotic from the village of Divin; Dragan Kulas, the owner of the Vozd clothes shop in Bileca; Slobodan Kulas, Zeljko Radovanovic, Miso Sarenac and his father Mico Sarenac from the village of Narak; Garan Milicevic, a certain Vukoje, the son of Zvonko from the village of Padjeni; Miso Vukoje and Meso Vukoje from the village of Plana; Radovan Prelja from the village of Korita; and a certain Radovic from Bileca.

'Confusion' over Germany's Airdrop Intentions

LD2703204493 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1838 GMT 27 Mar 93

[by Milenko Babic]

[Text] Bonn, March 27 (TANJUG)—The confusion surrounding Germany's attempt to join the U.S. humanitarian airdrop to the Moslems in war-ravaged eastern Bosnia shows no signs of clearing up. All that is certain at this time is that German planes would not be flying on airdrop missions for the time being.

The first of the controversial reports arrived when the German Defence Ministry said the United Nations had cancelled the flight of a German plane scheduled for Thursday night [25 March] and would discuss when German planes would join the airdrop, if at all.

This information was followed by another, this time from New York, that each country, and that means Germany, too, should decide for itself if it wanted to take part in the operation.

Lastly, there came the reason for the cancellation of Germany's participation in the airdrop—allegedly, Bosnian Serbs have threatened to shoot at the transporters if a single German plane should happen to be among them. According to the writing of the German press on Saturday, Bonn had not taken the 'Serb threat' seriously enough at first but had then, after serious thought, decided to call off the planned German flight.

Whatever the true reason might be, Bonn has kept silent about the information received a few days ago that the participation of each new state in the eastern Bosnia airdrop had to be approved by the Bosnian Serb Republic, among others. The information has been dismissed, though unofficially, as empty talk which should not be taken seriously.

It would appear, however, that the United Nations takes it seriously enough, and not because 'Bosnian Serbs are unpredictable,' but for some other reasons which are such that not even the humanitarian character of the operation can obliterate them, at least not where Germany is concerned.

The German DPA news agency quoted sources in Bonn as saying that the first German plane failed to take off on the mission because of a risk of interference 'from the (Bosnian) Serbs or another of the warring sides.' So, the danger does not come from the Serbs alone.

In a later report, the DPA quoted a U.N. official, who wished to remain anonymous, as advising the United States to be smart and continue the operation on their own, and tell the Germans to stay away.

This basically means that German planes in the airdrop might be considered as a provocation, especially as Bonn has all but decided to have its pilots on board AWACS [airborne warning and control system] surveillance planes which would monitor a possible enforcement of a no-fly zone over Bosnia-Herzegovina, although no such decision has been passed by the U.N. Security Council.

Nothwithstanding all this, semiofficial sources here say that a crisis committee has been set up of officials of the U.N. Protection Force (UNPROFOR), the United States, France and Germany, reportedly to discuss whether or not to continue the airdrop operation and let German planes in on the action.

It is not clear what the committee has decided about this last question. Meanwhile, the United States continues the operation without German help.

Serbs Plunder Largest Aid Convoy

93BA0703B Ljubljana DELO in Slovene 1 Mar 93 p 5

[Article by Veso Stojanov: "The Serbs Robbed an Alsatian Humanitarian Convoy"]

[Text]*In Ilidza, the Serbs took all the more valuable technical items from the Alsatian humanitarian convoy, and to boot, intimidated the leader of the convoy with a pistol.*

Ljubljana, 28 Feb—"It was nothing more than just a common robbery," nurse Jacqueline, who was all upset upon arriving in Kiseljak late Friday evening, commented on the behavior of policemen on the Serbian side of the "border." She was escorting one of the largest humanitarian convoys in the last few months, which was bringing approximately 300 metric tons of aid, worth more than 1.6 million German marks, from the French province of Alsace to Sarajevo.

During the return of more than 60 trucks and other smaller vehicles in the large convoy from Sarajevo, the Serbs at the Kobiljaca "border crossing" took almost all the more valuable items from all the participants, except for us journalists who were covering the convoy. These ranged from cameras, video cameras, CB radios, and a satellite telephone to a portable generator, publications, and letters that were sent from Sarajevo with the convoy. To boot, they spent three hours "persuading" the leader of the convoy, Yves Dubois, who is also the chief editor of Alsatian television, in the manner characteristic of them—with a pistol to his head—and finally "persuaded" him to sign some sort of document saying that he had voluntarily turned over all the confiscated items to the Serbian Republic.

The confiscated, or rather stolen, items during the convoy's return were not all that the Serbs took from that convoy. Upon the convoy's arrival at the Serbian "border" crossing of Kobiljaca in the middle of last week, in fact, more than half of the packages of humanitarian aid that were sent by DELO, the Slovene Chamber of Commerce, and Ljubljanska Banka by that convoy to their colleagues in Sarajevo were taken from the trucks in the middle of the road. The commander of the Serbian police there, Goran Zubac, in fact said that those packages were not properly declared and that convoy leader Dubois did not have proper papers for them. That is why they ended up in Serbian hands. In Ilidza, the Alsatians also had to pay the Serbs the "tax" for crossing through their territory that is usually paid by almost all humanitarian aid convoys.

The Serbs, in fact, as a rule take a certain amount of the cargo from every humanitarian convoy. Under the pretext that the Serbs in Ilidza also needed humanitarian aid, six trucks of food and coffee had to be emptied at the warehouse of some sort of Serbian Red Cross. When we nevertheless left for Sarajevo after being detained for almost an entire day in Ilidza, thinking that there would no longer be difficulties with the Serbs, because they had already thus taken part of the cargo from us, and furthermore Yves Dubois had secretly given the police commander 2,000 marks, upon our departure from Ilidza we were stopped by a group of uniformed people, and they started to inspect us once more. The members of the Serbian Guard and the Serbian Republic's army "justified" their action by saying that most of the weapons for the Muslim fighters were coming to Sarajevo with humanitarian convoys. During this fairly crude inspection, they took away from us four journalists the bulletproof vests that we had with us, and several CB radios from the trucks and escort vehicles.

The Serbian robbery of the Alsatian humanitarian convoy is primarily a consequence of the poor organization of the entire humanitarian action and Dubois's statement at a press conference in Sarajevo that during the passage through Serbian territory the Serbs had stolen part of the cargo, which the latter, of course, remembered, and also took other valuables during the convoy's return. The leaders of the convoy trusted that because of its size the convoy would arrive without major difficulties through all the checkpoints and "borders," of which there really are an enormous number on the road through Bosnia, and consequently, upon the convoy's departure from Strasbourg, they did not want to be under the protection of UNPROFOR [UN Protection Force], UNHCR [UN High Commissioner for Refugees], the Red Cross, or any other humanitarian organization involved in the delivery of humanitarian aid to Bosnia-Herzegovina. Yves Dubois already told us at the beginning of the trip that he hoped that all the opposing sides in Bosnia would adhere to international humanitarian law, and that is also why he did not ask UNPROFOR for protection. When we arrived in Kiseljak, which lies 35 km northwest of Sarajevo and is controlled by HVO [Croatian Defense Council] units, Dubois, at the UNPROFOR headquarters there, did asked for an escort of blue helmets through Serbian territory in Ilidza, but he did not receive one. The Serbs took advantage of this, and upon the convoy's arrival and departure from their territory simply took everything that appealed to them.

Regardless of all the unpleasantness that the convoy experienced on its way to and from Sarajevo, the most important thing is nevertheless that a large amount of humanitarian aid did get into the right hands. The editorial office of the Sarajevo daily OSLOBODJENJE was very delighted by the convoy, since we brought with us seven packages of newsprint, which we sent our colleagues in Sarajevo from our newspaper firm. The exhausted residents of Sarajevo have been living for 11 months now under a complete Serbian blockade, with a shortage of basic vital necessities, water, electricity, and heat. The people of Sarajevo are very delighted by every such convoy, not just because of the humanitarian aid itself that these convoys bring, but also because the convoys are their only link with the outside world.

Croats React to Izetbegovic Signing of Plan

LD2603161993 Zagreb Radio Croatia Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Report from Mostar Slavko Rako for Croatian radio]

[Text] Mostar has been following with particular attention everything in connection with Mr. Alija Izetbegovic's move last night regarding the entire Vance-Owen plan. There have been no official reactions, but at our request Zijad Demirovic, chairman of the regional committee of the Party of Democratic Action, has agreed to comment on President Izetbegovic's decision to sign the document:

[Begin unidentified speaker recording] First, I think that Mr. Izetbegovic has achieved what he wanted. Right from the start, we people from Mostar and the regional committee of the Party of Democratic Action for Herzegovina gave full support to Mr. Izetbegovic and the negotiating team of the state of Bosnia-Herzegovina. In my opinion both nations should be pleased with the fact that identical problems which have existed thus far have in fact become an obligation for both nations following the signing of the document [as heard]. [end recording]

[Rako] Alija Izetbegovic's signature on the Vance-Owen plan in New York last night was the main topic of a news conference today given by the defense department of the Croatian Defense Council. Here is a commentary by its spokesman, Veso Vegar:

[Begin Vegar recording] The Croatian Defense Council has long awaited Alija Izetbegovic's signature and we hold that it would have been much better had Mr. Izetbegovic signed the Vance-Owen plan even before, much better both for the Croatian people and particularly for the Muslim nation. This is a necessary, but not sufficient move for the resolution of the war and the constitutional crisis in Bosnia-Herzegovina. It will be a catalyst for the peace process which has already been endangered. Now it is the turn for international political diplomatic factors to use economic sanctions, or even military actions, to force the Serb aggressor to accept the plan. [end recording]

Strategic Importance of Konjic Assessed

93BA0708D Zagreb DANAS in Serbo-Croatian 26 Feb 93 pp 28-29

[Article by Patrik Macek: "The Exit Door From Bosnia"]

[Text] Since the first battles around the weapons stores of the former JNA [Yugoslav People's Army] located in Konjic Opstina, that town in Herzegovina has rarely attracted public attention. The exceptions were the events revolving around Jovan Divjak, a member of the General Staff of the Army of Bosnia-Herzegovina [B-H], and its top-level officer, Zejnilo Delalic, when the former was arrested on suspicion of collaborating with the enemy, and the latter saved himself by fleeing to Vienna, and a few stories about refugees from eastern Bosnia who managed to get through to Konjic over the mountain crags.

The entire Neretva Valley, and therefore Konjic as well as one of the towns in it, is of great importance to central Bosnia, especially because the conflicts of the HVO [Croatian Defense Council] and the Bosnian Army have intensified in Prozor and Gornji Vakuf, because all traffic from the Croatian border to the interior was sent along that route. Provided, of course, that the situation in the vicinity of Kiseljak allowed any traffic at all beyond Konjic.

Karadzic's Chetniks are also aware of Konjic's strategic importance, and so they have recently brought considerable reinforcements, including some 50 Russian volunteers, into the hills that dominate the town.

But to someone visiting the demolished town it seems that that is not the main problem Konjic must face. The cracks within the defense forces are noted much more easily. The Bosnian Army has made it known by certain of its actions that it will attempt at any price to realize in the town an influence commensurate to the present proportion of Muslims in the total population, which is essentially different than before the war because of the influx of a large number of refugees.

There have been no very significant armed conflicts between the HVO and the Bosnian Army, but the tension in the city and some of the surrounding villages is constant and easy to see.

Muslim extremists have been acting more frequently to get the remaining Serbian population, which up to now has shown full loyalty to the authorities of the Croatian Community of Herzeg-Bosnia, to move out in order to make room for settlement of Muslim refugees.

Recalling events which have left a considerable trace on relations between the HVO and the Bosnian Army, we cannot fail to mention the bomb thrown at HVO soldiers in the city.

The increasingly frequent incidents are instilling bitterness in the Croatian population and HVO soldiers, and if they continue in the future, there could easily be an open conflict. To be sure, a majority of the officers of the Bosnian Army, both in the commands and in the field, have a desire to ease the tension, and this has been accompanied by a number of specific acts, but it is mainly contingent upon giving up the Croatian Community of Herzeg-Bosnia.

In Konjic, one can see pictures which depart from the overall situation. One of them is the field hospital which is operating splendidly under the joint sponsorship of the HVO and Bosnian Army. Formed from the prewar personnel of the health center, the hospital has for a long time been caring for all the wounded throughout the entire region between Sarajevo and Mostar.

The hospital is mainly supplied by Caritas. At this point, Caritas is supplying both about 2,000 Croatian families and probably the same number of inhabitants of other nationalities, who whenever possible are given assistance regardless of the established regulations. Caritas is administered with some volunteers by the Franciscans of Konjic who have also been trying to organize a full religious life for their parishioners in their monastery, which has received several direct hits.

Religious services are conducted regularly in the basement of the monastery gallery, the only safe place; it is also the dormitory and workspace for members of the order.

Catholic priests are at the moment the only religious officers in the city. Orthodox priests left the city immediately after the war began, and all the Islamic religious officers are in the ranks of the Bosnian Army.

Of all priestly activities, the Konjic Franciscans have given up only conducting funerals, which are done exclusively at night, because the Musala Cemetery is constantly under attack from the Chetnik guns.

Everyday life in Konjic also has its other side. It is almost incredible to see a very well-attended exhibition of pictures in the wood cellar of a residential building, and the pictures are even for sale. And this in a city in which almost no one has had steady income for the last year, nor is anyone certain that he will live to the next day.

In spite of all the troubles that war brings, it is obvious that Konjic and the people of Konjic are continuing on.

Bihac Leader Says Supplies Limited

93P50114A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 24 Mar 93 p 8

[Report by As'ad Tahaj]

[Text] Zagreb—With respect to what has been repeated about starvation threatening to move from eastern Bosnia to other regions, and especially the district of Bihac in the extreme northwest, Fikret Hajic [name as published] said that the amounts of relief supplies that have arrived through the High Commission for Refugees is "limited in the extreme. Hajic—the secretary of the Party of Democratic Action [PDA] in the Cazinska Krajina region, in which 250,000 people live, of them about 20,000 refugees—added that "our region, especially Bihac, has recently faced Serbian shelling and fierce battles, and without the arrival of more aid, the situation will not end or change."

He said: "The last aid convoy reached us at the end of January. At that time, we received small amounts of foodstuffs, which consisted of some canned goods and flour, while we are suffering from a lack of sugar and cooking oil."

Hajic said on the telephone with AL-HAYAH that "our reserve amounts of foodstuffs have disappeared, and we have become dependent on the arrival of relief through Zagreb, which reaches us intermittently."

He explained that "our situation now is not tragic, but the continuation of fierce battles and the tightening of the Serbian enemy's siege on us and their blocking the relief convoys will repeat the tragic example of eastern Bosnia."

The PDA secretary affirmed that the Serbian forces have been suffering great losses in their ranks because of their repeated infantry attacks, especially recently, when savage battles took place in the regions of Bosansky Krupa and Bihac, during which 60 Serbs were killed and a large number were wounded."

An official with the High Commission for Refugees in Zagreb admitted: "We are trying to prevent the tragic events in eastern Bosnia from happening again in Bihac."

She told AL-HAYAH that the air route from the Croatian port of Split to Tuzla that was announced had not yet begun operating. However, she indicated that relief convoys no longer reached central Bosnia or the Hercegovina region (in the southwest) regularly.

In addition, the Croatian press published an eyewitness account by an elderly woman who reached Tuzla in the wave [of refugees] coming from Srebrenica, which included 683 women, children, and wounded men. This group was subjected to some 80 attempts separate out the wounded. The eyewitness said: "We were eating tree bark. There were no food supplies. Those who lived in the mountains were most likely to die of starvation. In spite of the fact that the American relief parcels landed in that area, the strong were the ones who were able to find them. General Morillon began to weep when he saw with his own eyes children dying of starvation in their mothers' arms. Morillon became a champion of the people after he saw what they were enduring. He realized that he had been deceived in Cerska when he denied that the Muslims were being massacred there."

Sarinic Announces Government's Resignation

LD2903103593 Zagreb Radio Croatia Network in Serbo-Croatian 1000 GMT 29 Mar 93

[Text] We have just learned that the Croatian Government has resigned. In a statement issued after a government session that began at 1100 today, with Hrvoje Sarinic in the chair, the government stresses:

Recent elections to the Chamber of Counties of the Assembly of the Republic of Croatia and to state and local administration bodies completed the process of setting up a system of state administration in accordance with the Constitution and constitutional law of the Republic of Croatia. This has created conditions necessary for making changes in the entire system of state administration bodies, including the government of the Republic of Croatia.

On his own behalf and on behalf of the government he headed, Prime Minister Hrvoje Sarinic placed his mandate at the disposal of Franjo Tudjman, president of the Republic of Croatia. On behalf of the government and his own behalf, Hrvoje Sarinic thanked Franjo Tudjman, president of the Republic of Croatia, for his trust and support, stressing at the same time that he and all government members would continue to be at the disposal of the homeland of Croatia and its president.

Tudjman, Izetbegovic Issue Statement on Peace Plan

LD2703235393 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 2300 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Text] Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic held a meeting with Croatian President Franjo Tudjman in Zagreb this evening. Following the talks, the two presidents signed a joint statement, stressing:

1. The Republic of Croatia welcomes the decision by Izetbegovic and Boban to sign the Vance-Owen plan.

2. Croatian President Franjo Tudjman and Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic demand full and efficient implementation of the Vance-Owen plan taking into consideration the experience with the inefficient implementation of the Vance plan in the Republic of Croatia, a plan that is hindered systematically by the Serb side.

3. Both presidents warn the international community that the aggression of Serbia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia against both Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia is continuing. This should be taken into account when planning the deployment of the peacekeeping forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the extension of the UN Protection Force's mandate in Croatia.

4. If the Serb side does not fulfill the international community's demands regarding the implementation of the Vance-Owen plan and if it continues its aggression, the presidents demand the suspension of the embargo on the import of arms for Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

5. Presidents Tudjman and Izetbegovic express their readiness for close cooperation between the Republic of Croatia and the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and they stress the need for full cooperation between the Croat and Muslim people in Bosnia-Herzegovina regarding the implementation of the Vance-Owen plan, in particular if the aggression continues.

This is said in the joint statement signed by Presidents Franjo Tudjman and Alija Izetbegovic.

Tudjman Receives Defense Minister, Officers

LD2603194293 Zagreb Radio Croatia Network in Serbo-Croatian 1600 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] A statement released by the President's Office today states that Croatian President Dr. Franjo Tudjman received top-ranking officials of the Ministry of Defense, headed by Minister Gojko Susak and top-ranking officers of the General Staff of the Croatian Army, headed by Chief of General Staff Corps General Janko Bobetko, Commander of the Croatian Navy Admiral Sveto Letica, and Major General Imre Agotic, commander of the Croatian Air Force and Antiaircraft Defense.

They informed the president of the republic about the present military and security situation in the republic and the current organization of the armed forces. The president spoke about the general political situation and efforts made by Croatia toward the peaceful resolution of the situation. The president then went on to speak about the role and duties of the armed forces in the consistent implementation of state policy, stressing that the armed forces must set an example in the observance of the legal order, and recalled, inter alia, that saving is necessary at all levels.

Those present were informed about an order by the president on renaming the former Administration for Information and Psychological Activities to the Administration for Political Activities, which is tasked with improving and promoting the present level of effectiveness and responsibility for the morale and political awareness of the armed forces of the Republic of Croatia and the links between the military and civilian authorities.

National Security Council in Session 25 Mar

LD2603154693 Zagreb Radio Croatia Network in English/Serbo-Croatian

[Text] At a session yesterday, the Council of National Security examined the difficulties regarding extening the UN Protection Force [UNPROFOR] mandate. As the president's office announced today, the council was informed about a decision by the president of the republic according to which the Office for the Protection of Constitutional Order of the Republic of Croatia has been abolished and the Office for National Security has been introduced instead. The office will deal with problems of state and national security, it was said. It will coordinate activities of state ministries and other state bodies dealing with security issues and collect, analyze, and assess reports necessary for the work of the Council of Defense and National Security and the president of the republic.

In the same decision, Josip Manolic, head of the Office for the Protection of Constitutional Order of the Republic of Croatia, has been relieved of his post. He has assumed a new post. His deputy, Zdravko Mustoc, and all other members of the office have also been relieved of their duties, it has been announced.

Krajina Assembly Confirms Zecevic Replacement

AU2803181993 Belgrade Radio Beograd Network in Serbo-Croatian 1300 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] The extraordinary meeting of the Assembly of the republic of Serbian Krajina ended in Beli Manastir late last night. As our correspondent Vladimir Nikolic reports, despite outstanding differences in opinion, the deputies expressed an enviable level of objectivity regarding the situation that the republic of Serbian Krajina is in.

[Begin recording] [Nikolic] With a majority vote, the Assembly endorsed President Hadzic's decision to replace Prime Minister Zdravko Zecevic, which meant a vote of no confidence for the rest of the government as well.

Djordje Bjegovic, former energy minister, is the new prime minister-designate of the Republic of Serbian Krajina. At the regular Assembly meeting in two weeks, Bjegovic will propose a government to be approved by the Assembly. In a brief speech, Bjegovic stressed the struggle against crime and black marketing.

General Mile Novakovic, commander of the Army of the Serbian Republic [as heard], also addressed the Assembly. He expressed pleasure with the enviable level of unity among the deputies which prevailed at the meeting.

The Assembly also expressed its confidence in Assembly Chairman Mile Paspalj and supported the report by President Goran Hadzic on the negotiations the republic of Serbian Krajina delegation held in Geneva and in New York.

As the negotiations should resume tomorrow after this meeting ends, we asked Hadzic to make a brief statement.

[Hadzic] In the continuation of the negotiations we are certainly going to have the initiative, as what we achieved so far represents a great achievement for the Serbian people, not only in Krajina but beyond. Tudjman negated these talks, returned everything to the starting point, and even (?called off) his (?team). He made a diplomatic precedent such as I have never heard of anywhere in the world. Due to this and the Croatian aggression against us, as well as the events up there in Banija [words indistinct] in the Kinjacka Hotel, we are certainly going to have the initiative. [Words indistinct] 802 and that UNPROFOR mandate should be extended in the way it has been so far and not to change the mandate [word indistinct] use Chapter 7. The negotiations can go in this direction alone and no one will get any concession from our side. We can [word indistinct] only the interest of the people. We have no other options and no more room. [end recording]

RSK Prime Minister Designate Outlines Plans

LD2803124093 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1049 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] Beli Manastir, 28 Mar (TANJUG)—Djordje Bjegovic, prime minister designate of the Republic of Serb Krajina (RSK), announced last night in an address to deputies of the Krajina parliament in Beli Manastir that he would select a team of experts from throughout the RSK within 15 days and form a government which will be capable of tackling all problems. The first aim would be a clamp-down on crime and war profiteering, because these negative phenomena are clearly on the increase, Bjegovic said.

The government, he added, would have to find and put forward the best solutions for improving the general situation, particularly with regard to increasing food production, because Krajina can produce, with everyone's consistent involvement, as much as 30 percent over and above the republic's food requirements.

The government must constantly bear in mind the fact that the Croatian Government is not desisting from war, and it must make every effort so that in this war the RSK achieves its final goal and wins, Bjegovic stressed.

The proposal of RSK President Goran Hadzic that the prime minister designate of the new Krajina government should be Djordje Bjegovic, former minister of industry and energy, was unanimously endorsed by all participants at yesterday's first extraordinary session of the Krajina parliament.

Paspalj Wins Krajina Assembly Vote of Confidence

AU2703164593 Belgrade Radio Beograd Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Text] The extraordinary meeting of the Assembly of the Republic of Serbian Krajina is under way in Beli Manastir. Goran Hadzic, president of the republic, is reporting on the negotiations that the Krajina delegation held in Geneva. Here is a report by Vladimir Nikolic:

[Begin recording] The speech by President Hadzic was preceded by a debate on the agenda, because a group of deputies demanded that their proposed vote of confidence in Assembly Chairman Mile Paspalj be taken. Paspalj then addressed the deputies and assessed the current security situation in the republic and his work in that regard. With 141 favorable votes out of 220 deputies present, the deputies decided that Paspalj should remain in his post.

Deputies are also scheduled to vote on the report on the Geneva negotiations which Hadzic is submitting, as well on the work of the government in the period since the last Assembly meeting.

Let us say at the end that during the debate about the agenda, reporters were given permission to attend the meeting. [end recording]

Hadzic Notes Serbs' Lack of 'Clear Platform' at Talks

LD2703215493 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1614 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Excerpts] Beli Manastir, 27 Mar (TANJUG)—The first extraordinary session of the Republic of Serb Krajina [RSK] Assembly began several hours late in Beli Manastir today with a vote of confidence in RSK Assembly President Mile Paspalj. [passage omitted]

The central issue of today's session of the Assembly was the report of RSK President Goran Hadzic on the course and results of the talks in New York and Geneva. Hadzic stressed that the RSK delegation had signed virtually nothing at the talks because, as he said, even if it had done so, it would not be legitimate without verification by the Assembly.

Besides this, Hadzic underlined, because of the lack of time they went to the talks without a detailed platform, which can only be approved and endorsed by the RSK Assembly. That is why it is very important to draw up a clear platform which would form a basis for all future negotiations. In the debate which followed there were a number of critical remarks, particularly concerning the attendance at the talks without clear goals and the defined stands of the Assembly.

The Assembly is continuing its work and is expected to sit tomorrow as well, when it is expected to open the debate on the reports on the work of the government between the two sessions of the Assembly.

RSK 'Will Not Change' Position on Troop Withdrawal

LD2803164493 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1625 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] Kragujevac, Yugoslavia, March 29 (TANJUG)—The Republic of Serb Krajina (RSK) will not change its position in indirect negotiations with Croatia, although it expects new pressures and military threats, RSK Foreign Minister Slobodan Jarcevic said on Sunday [28 March].

Confirming that a Krajina delegation would leave on Monday for New York for the next round of the Geneva talks, Jarcevic told Radio Kragujevac (central Serbia) that the RSK delegation would demand that Croatia abide by the terms of a U.N. Security Council resolution calling for an unconditional withdrawal of Croatian forces to the positions they held before the aggression was started (January 22 this year).

"We shall defend our state with arms, as we are under armed attack, but the U.N. and the international community say we must negotiate, and that is why we are going to New York," Jarcevic said.

Making a number of concessions, representatives of the RSK about ten days ago reached agreement with international mediators on the manner in which the resolution on the withdrawal of Croatian forces would be realized, but the Croatian side has failed to give its agreement so far.

The Serbs proclaimed the RSK in 1991 in areas inside the administrative borders of Croatia where they are the majority population in protest over Croatia's secession from Yugoslavia and the degradation of their status in its new constitution from a nation to a national minority.

Thornberry on Extension of UNPROFOR Mandate

LD2503213893 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1938 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] Belgrade, March 25 (TANJUG)—Director of Civil Affairs of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) Cedric Thornberry said on Thursday [25 March] that a report on the extension of the UNPROFOR mandate in the U.N. Protected Area (UNPA) in the territory of former Yugoslavia, due to expire on March 31, would be submitted to the Security Council by U.N. Secretary-General Butrus Butrus-Ghali on Thursday or Friday.

UNPA covers the Republic of Serb Krajina (R.S.K.), which was proclaimed in the territory of former Yugoslavia populated for centuries by Serbs, after the unilateral and forcible secession of Croatia from the former Yugoslav Federation in 1991.

Thornberry told a press conference in Belgrade that the Croatian and Krajina Serb representatives at the Geneva negotiations had come close to a ceasefire agreement in UNPA Sector South.

On January 22 Croatian troops launched an aggression on the southern part of the R.S.K., including attacks on the UNPROFOR troops there. The R.S.K. has been under continuous Croatian attacks over the past two months, in violation of Security Council Resolution 802 which calls for the withdrawal of Croatian troops to their positions before the aggression.

Thornberry confirmed that Croatian troops were concentrating in the region of Drnis, UNPA Sector South.

and in the region of Blinjski Kut, UNPA Sector North, from where they had not withdrawn in spite of UNPROFOR's demand.

Croatian artillery mostly bombards the towns of Obrovac, Benkovac and Kistanje in Krajina, Thornberry added.

The targets are especially civilian buildings in these Serb localities, and the aim is to deprive the local Serb population of their homes.

Commenting on the situation in eastern Bosnia, Thornberry accused the Bosnian Serbs of having territorial claims in that part of Bosnia, where they have lived together with Moslems for centuries. Thornberry recalled that eastern Bosnia was conceived as a Moslem province in the maps dividing Bosnia-Herzegovina into ten provinces, which were drafted by cochairmen of the Geneva conference on former Yugoslavia Cyrus Vance and Lord Owen.

The Bosnian Serbs do not accept the Vance-Owen map on the division of Bosnia-Herzegovina which gives parts of the territories inhabited by one-third of the total Bosnian Serb population to Moslem and Croat provinces. The map was also rejected by the Moslems, who demanded even greater territorial concessions to the disadvantage of Serbs.

Thornberry also assessed the situation in southern Bosnia-Herzegovina as "very dangerous and unstable," and said that Dubrovnik was exposed to artillery fire last Tuesday, for the first time in the past eight months.

In a highly biased interpretation of the causes of the incident Thornberry said that the Serbs from the Serb eastern Herzegovina had told UNPROFOR that it was closely connected with an "alleged artillery attack on Trebinje by the Croatian Army."

Last Tuesday, the Croatian Army launched a destructive artillery attack on Serb civilians and civilian targets in Trebinje, killing one person and wounding 18.

A team of European Community and United Nations observers was in Trebinje during the attack. On Wednesday, its members confirmed that they had witnessed the pounding of the Serb town.

Fighting Resumes on North Dalmation Battlefield

LD2903100493 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 0921 GMT 29 Mar 93

[Text] Knin, 29 Mar (TANJUG)—After a two-day lull, fighting has been renewed at the north Dalmatian battlefield, the main headquarters of the Serb republic of Krajina Army stated this morning.

Last night and today Croatian forces shelled the positions of Krajina units and civilian targets. The villages of Skabrnja, Kasic and the villages in the Skradin hinterland are under fire.

According to the statement, the Sinj-Vrlika front of the north Dalmatian battlefield has been activated even though no major clashes were registered there over the last few days. Clashes also continued on the Zadar-Benkovac frontline.

On Mount Kordun, in the Mekusje area, Croatian forces fired 50 mortar shells at the Serb positions. According to the statement, fresh units of the Croatian Army are arriving in this area.

Serbs Reportedly Attack Zadar, Killing Girl

LD2803163193 Zagreb Radio Croatia Network in Serbo-Croatian 1600 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] A nine-year old girl was killed, while one person was woulded in a chetnik artillery attack on Zadar, which was launched shortly after 1400 this afternoon. Material damage is huge. One hour after the attack, in which eight artillery projectiles hit Zadar town quarters, the Serbian aggressor opened fire from multiple rocket launchers on Biograd and a general alert was sounded for that town. There were no casualties in the criminal attack, but fresh material damage was caused.

Prior to the afternoon attack on Biograd, chetniks opened fierce artillery fire on Croatian Army positions, particularly in Paljuv, Islam and Kasic. The enemy did not spare civilian facilities either. Apart from Zadar and Biograd, this afternoon Serbian artillery has pounded the villages of Debeljak, Gorica, Prkos, and Galovac in the Ravni Kotari region.

Zagreb Radio Views Progress of Peace Plan

LD2603193393 Zagreb Radio Croatia Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] The process initiated by the international community in order to stop the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina is entering its decisive phase. Here is a commentary by Nenad Stazic:

Alija Izetbegovic's signature on all the documents of the Vance-Owen peace plan indicates two things: First, the Muslim forces are militarily too weak on their own to preserve the territory that the world community recognizes as theirs. Second: everyone who counts on the help of the international community must consent to cooperate with it. Alija Izetbegovic has used up too much time to understand this. In general, everything he did was fatally overdue.

When courage was needed for the Bosnians to defend themselves in fighting he exercised wisdom and refused to understand who the attacker was. Then when the world was already looking for a path to peace, Izetbegovic courageously saw war as a solution.

By delaying signing the peace plan he gained the fourth province, the province of Sarajevo, but he has also exposed his people to a senseless massacre in six long months of unnecessary fighting. It became clear long ago that the international community would not protect the Muslims by starting a war against Serbia, even if it knew who the aggressor was and who the victim was. Statements by world leaders have for a long time indicated the way to solve the crisis: to force all the sides to consent to an agreement and only then to implement it, using force if necessary. Only in this way would none of the parties in the conflict be in a position to say that the military intervention is unjustly directed against one of the nations.

Pressure is unnecessary in the case of the Croats who, having mainly defended their territory, immediately signed the agreement. To force the Muslims to sign the agreement it was enough to refuse to protect them from a massacre, and the real pressure on the Serbs is yet to come. What form it is going to take is still not known, but it was announced this morning in statements by world leaders. The United States is considering the possibility of cancelling the arms import embargo for the Muslims. U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher is talking about the stricter isolation of the Serbs, and Jacques Chirac, leader of the Gaullists, says: We must finally deal with Serbia properly. Karadzic [Serbian republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina president] will sign the agreement too. He will have to, just like Izetbegovic had to do it. He will be forced to do it, if not by anyone else then by Milosevic when his country finds itself in a total isolation. He will either force him to sign the agreement or remove him from office, as he removed the disobedient Babic [former president of the republic of Serbian Krajina] in Croatia. Only Karadzic's signature, the ninth signature on the agreement, opens wide the door to military intervention. It will be a sharp action, David Owen says.

Commentary Claims Herzeg-Bosnia Hampers Croatia

AU2503155493 Split SLOBODNA DALMACIJA in Serbo-Croatian 21 Mar 93 p 9

[Commentary by Vjekoslav Krsnik: "A State Within a State"]

[Text] If the realization of the independence and sovereignty of the Croatian state is based on recognition of the AVNOJ [Anti-Fascist Council of People's Liberation of Yugoslavia] borders, and if recognition of the existing borders, based on the Helsinki Charter, which the organizers of the conference on former Yugoslavia have to respect, constitutes the basis on which the entire European security system is founded, then everything that threatens this basis also threatens Croatia. Such a danger is the Croatian Community of Herzeg-Bosnia, which grew out of the existing international, political circumstances as a hybrid of the unrealistic ambition to annex, if not the whole of Bosnia-Herzegovina stretching to the Drina River, then at least the part which used to belong to the former Banat of Croatia [Banovina Hrvatska], to the mother country of the Croatian people. Luckily for the Republic of Croatia, this hybrid ceases to exist with the Vance-Owen plan, at least in its present form, a form conceived and realized by its idealogues and creators on the territory of the neighboring state during this year of war atrocities.

From the standpoint of strengthening the internal and external political stability of the Republic of Croatia within the existing borders, Herzeg-Bosnia has, from the time it was thought up to its realization, hampered this goal in several ways. It is common knowledge that a large part of the weapons intended for the poorly armed Croatian soldiers who were resisting the pan-Serbian aggression and the JNA [Yugoslav People's Army], ended up in Herzegovina. It is true that thanks to this, Herzegovina was prepared for the chetnik aggression, but it is possible to ask whether there would have been an aggression at all, had the JNA been stopped at Vukovar.

By adhering to the political and moral right to care about a part of its people in Bosnia-Herzegovina, a people that is also one of the constitutive peoples, Zagreb's decision to take the side of only a part of its people in the Croatian question in the neighboring state, has turned over the greater part of the Croats to the merciless and tragic fate caused by the aggressor.

This resulted in catastrophic consequences on the international level. The creation of the parastate [paradrzava] of "Herzeg-Bosnia", a state from which the Republic of Croatia did not once officially distance itself, constituted a logical basis for the rebel Serbs in the so-called Krajina to demand, with the help of their Belgrade guardians, sovereignty for the occupied area under UNPROFOR's [United Nations Protection Forces] protection.

To tell the truth, when he was trying to convince the international public that Croatia had no territorial ambitions towards Bosnia-Herzegovina, something that could have come from his agreement with Milosevic, Tudjman kept repeating that Zagreb had been among the first to recognize the neighboring state and that it had even appointed an ambassador to it. The fact that the appointed ambassador is originally from Bosnia-Herzegovina aside, which cannot be considered a wise diplomatic solution, Croatia, as far as it is known, did not once make use of its formal right to distance itself from the actions of the parastate organs of Herzeg-Bosnia in Sarajevo. The most recent example occurred when a convoy of trucks bound for areas outside of Herzeg-Bosnia's jurisdiction, was stopped on the border between Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Finally, the conflicts between the members of the HVO [Croatian Defense Council] and the Muslim forces, the Army of Bosnia-Herzegovina that is, regardless of who is to blame for them, and regardless of what is insisted on in the Croatian media because it is clear that the blame is not all Muslim, have given the international public the picture that this is really civil war. Precisely what Belgrade wanted.

According to this picture, what is going on in Bosnia-Herzegovina is not Serbia's aggression on a sovereign state and on Muslims and Croats, but a war between three sides, ethnic and denominational. In world metropolises, where the fate of the states established on the territory of the former Yugoslavia is being decided, the logical conclusion which followed from this development of the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, is no longer as advantageous for Croatia as it was right after it was internationally recognized. In this development of the situation and of Muslim-Croatian relations, lies the answer to the question why Germany, the main supporter of Croatian independence and sovereignty, restrained its political support in later phases.

The adoption of the Vance-Owen plan, providing it is signed by the Muslim and Serbian sides, means the end of both Herzeg-Bosnia and the so-called Serbian republic [of Bosnia-Herzegovina]. In a very confusing interview in GLOBUS, Mile Akmadzic, the prime minister of Bosnia-Herzegovina, still insists that Herzeg-Bosnia does not really exist, at least not as a state within a state. However, obvious facts like the establishing of separate organs of authority, which have no connection to the legal government of which he is prime minister, issuing of passports and visas, exhibiting flags, symbols and the like, clearly deny Akmadzic's claims. Although he claims that Herzeg-Bosnia is a temporary institution of the state of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which will cease to exist as soon as the war is over, further on, while talking about the cooperation of the future Croatian provinces, the Mostar and Travnik one for example, Akmadzic again uses the term "Croatian community of Herzeg-Bosnia."

As for the Republic of Croatia's policy in relation to the new organization of Bosnia-Herzegovina, it must firmly and consistently respect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the neighboring state, and it must not interfere in its internal affairs, since Zagreb has on numerous occasions enthusiastically supported the project of the chairmen of the conference on former Yugoslavia. Extending political and moral support to a part of the Croatian people in Bosnia-Herzegovina must remain a segment of Croatian foreign policy towards the neighboring state, while the state's internal organization, if this will be possible in the circumstances that will result from the international intervention, must rest on the constitutive rights of all three peoples, including the Croatian people, without any interference from outside. Only in this way will the present Herzeg-Bosnia, and the future one which still exists in some stubborn heads, stop being a millstone around the neck of Croatia's position in international relations.

Number of Croatian Casualties Estimated

93BA0720A Zagreb DANAS in Serbo-Croatian
5 Mar 93 pp 19-21

[Article by Zeljko Luburovic, including interview with Dr. Zvonimir Separovic, professor, former Croatian foreign minister; place and date not given: "Count the Dead and the Name of the Living"]

[Text] Dr. Zvonimir Separovic, professor, former foreign minister of the Republic of Croatia, and casualty finder with a world reputation, recently presented estimates on the number of casualties of the war in Croatia in a presentation of the activity of the association Documenta Croatica, which he heads. Thus, he estimated that the total number of casualties in this war is nearly 50,000, and he estimated losses of the Croatian side in the Maslenica action at about 200. Those estimates of his motivated the Administration for IPD (Information and Psychological Activity) of the Croatian Army [HV] to dispute Separovic's hypotheses with its own press release and to deliver him a by no means lukewarm lecture to the effect that politicization and manipulation of casualties does him no credit at all, and still less does it serve Croatia.

Asked to comment on the allegations of the Administration for IPD, Dr. Separovic told DANAS that he would like it if the IPD were right, but he emphasized that his statement contained only an estimate, and was by no means precise. "If the IPD is right, then the number of casualties at Maslenica is smaller, but the number at which I arrived came from a very competent source which I myself will make public if the need arises. This is a person who is familiar with the military situation. And my statement was in answer to a journalist's question about the real number of casualties in this war in Croatia," Separovic said.

Our attempt to obtain some comment at the IPD was a failure, because Mr. Vjekoslav Krizanec referred us to the Ministry of Health as the institution which assembles those data. And the data assembled by that ministry have been gathered since back in June 1991, which at that time was done by the Medical Command. The data collected in that place are usually the source used by representatives of the Croatian Government when they want to present the problem of casualties to the international community. It is evident from that ministry's last report that 6,442 persons were killed in Croatia up to 4 January 1993. Another 1,200 Croatian soldiers who have been killed have to be added to that number, and here we should bear in mind that that number did not include those killed in the Maslenica operation. At the same time, Croatia is searching for another 13,788 missing persons. It can be reliably said of 8,000 of them, applying all international criteria, that they were taken over to the other side.

Dobrica Cosic in his letter to President Tudjman, and also Milan Panic in a letter to the Croatian prime minister, said that there are no such people there at all. Varadi, the Yugoslav justice minister, sent a message to the same effect to Mate Granic, deputy prime minister. And that is why there can be reason to doubt that the figures of the Health Ministry are final. For that matter, they should not even be taken as such, mainly because the list of dead includes only identified victims, and they are those on whom there is all the necessary documentation for establishment of death, including the death certificate. Because for the present that is often not the case, the final number of war casualties in the Republic of Croatia remains open. And it is precisely that openness that made it possible for Dr. Separovic to present his estimates, which, incidentally, are the fruit of his painstaking effort in the association Documenta Croatica. Almost daily contacts with the families of victims, the collection of their accounts, and field trips open up to Separovic the horizons of his estimates. Devoted to his work, Separovic maintains that there is a need to establish as precisely as possible the number of war victims precisely in order to avoid politicization, in order to eliminate confusion. "But precisely for that reason," Separovic says, "because after the war restitution will make it necessary to know exactly the number of people from Croatia who are entitled to damages, whether they themselves seek it from the aggressor state or the Croatian state does so on their behalf."

Nevertheless, the gap between the possible and the actually recognized number of casualties is causing confusion of various kinds in the public, and so an "ordinary mortal" wonders whether perhaps it is a part of political strategy to underestimate war casualties. Separovic simply wants to believe that he is not naive and maintains that this is not a strategy of Croatian government policy, and the deputy prime minister, Mate Granic, maintains that the government is approaching this problem systematically and in keeping with all international criteria. "The government is open to every kind of international scrutiny, and also to public scrutiny, both foreign and domestic," Granic says. He adds that the government has nothing against nongovernmental organizations taking up the question of the number of war casualties, but he insists that those organizations should then engage in an investigative effort, which in fact would be of great help to the government.

From what it is possible to get from the Croatian Red Cross, Croatia is at the moment looking for 13,853 persons, and 407 are listed as captured. Dubravka Horvat, one of the directors of that organization, told us that the Red Cross has received 68 applications for delivery of remains, but that the Red Cross then sends those applications to the Defense Ministry, which then processes the case.

In the Commissioner's Office of Vukovar Opcina in Zagreb, records are kept on that opcina's war dead. These records are kept by Fanika Janko, who gave us a cross section of the data from that opcina. According to those records, 1,851 persons were killed in Vukovar, and 590 of those had been recorded in the Medical Command by 6 November 1991. On the pathology list of the JNA [Yugoslav People's Army], 709 persons who died after the occupation were identified, 266 of them were executed in the camps, and there are 286 names on the list of one gravedigger who buried people in Vukovar after the occupation. All these individual cases add up to the number of 1,851 dead. At the same time, another 2,600 people from Vukovar are missing, 304 of them from the Vukovar Hospital.

Fanika Janko says that it is estimated that the total number of dead in Vukovar is between 4,500 and 5,000, and some of them are buried in mass graves. There are 303 persons buried on Ovcara, 120 in the Sloga Stadium, 1,200 near the Kiwi store, 250 in the old brickyard, and 70 in Gelesova Dola. In the village Lovas, 140 people were put to death and thrown in a mass grave, 250 at Tovarnik, 300 at Jakobovac, 16 at Petrovci, and 32 at Berak. It is estimated that about 300 people disappeared at Bogdanci when the attempt was made to break out of Vukovar. Nevertheless, when you compare the fact that before the war Vukovar Opcina had a population of about 84,000, and at the moment only between 46,000 and 48,000 have been recorded, then there is quite a bit of room for speculation that the number of victims was in fact greater.

In order to avoid guessing, an investigation needs to be undertaken systematically and the number of victims determined, and this should be done exclusively with strict international methods and criteria. Faced by that imperative and the fact that an international court for war crimes has been established, they began in the Croatian Government to work out a system that would meet those strict requirements. A proposal was made for appointment of a minister without portfolio who would be responsible for human rights and with whom the "liaison officers" of the various ministries would be in constant communication. At the same time, a proposal was made to establish an office for war victims in the Government of the Republic of Croatia, and it would have a section for civilian victims, for military victims, for missing persons, for persons detained and imprisoned, and a section to coordinate the work of organizations concerned with subject matter of this kind.

A special place was intended for the Government War Crimes Commission, which was conceived as a commission of legal experts. A proposal was made to establish a human rights institute, and research in that field would be published in the Matija Vlacic Publishing House, and the government also took the initiative toward its establishment.

The government, then, is taking its first steps toward still better organization in investigating the number of war victims in Croatia. However, aside from the needs of historical truth and future demands for restitution, that number also needs to be established as precisely as possible because many family members of those listed as missing or known to be dead on the basis of a count are left with no opportunity of any kind of compensation solely because they cannot document the death. Neither a pension nor a payment nor anything else. Study of this problem should likewise help to awaken the international intellectual conscience, chiefly so as not to repeat disappointments like that of Dr. Separovic, who was simply surprised by the intellectual coolness of the World Society for Victimology, which he and a few intellectuals had established. And certainly a debate like the one between the Administration for IPD of the

Croatian Army and Dr. Separovic will presumably disappear when this problem is worked on more systematically. All the estimates up to that point of a total of 50,000 dead in the war in Croatia remain as a very promising possibility. The fact that so far only slightly more than 6,000 dead have been identified actually changes nothing. That can only be changed through pressure on international organizations which ought to compel the aggressor, in keeping with all international conventions, to collaborate in establishing the number of war victims. Up to now, the aggressor has stubbornly refused to do so! And the reason is that he hopes in that way to diminish his own responsibility before the International Court for war crimes committed.

Interview With Dr. Zvonimir Separovic: There Is No Monopoly on the Truth

[Luburovic] How do you interpret the fact that the Administration for IPD of the Croatian Army, rather than some other perhaps more relevant institution, reacted sharply to your estimates of the number of victims?

[Separovic] It is not up to me to judge who is relevant in the field of investigating victims. The Administration for IPD of the Croatian Army is certainly relevant, it has the right to speak up and state its judgment. I am sorry that they reacted so sharply. They do not have the right to reproach newsmen for having passed on the estimates "uncritically." No one has right to the truth, a monopoly of the truth, which belongs to no one, not even important institutions of the Croatian Army. They created confusion with that kind of press release. The Croatian Army has the best insight into losses of its own, our units. The public is not fully informed when reporting is incomplete. There are reports of heavy Chetnik losses. The IL MESSAGERO correspondent in Knin reports 800 Chetniks killed.

I learned from an entirely competent person about an estimate of our losses which I would be happy to find is not accurate. And that is where the misunderstanding began. We will have to ascertain the facts of this war in which we have suffered so gravely. On behalf of the historical truth, and now also because of the international criminal court and proceedings. In order to prosecute war criminals. The victims are at the basis of those crimes. We also build from the victims the proceedings for restitution as well as war damages and compensation. If estimates from Bosnian sources are accurate that 200,000 people have been killed in this war in B-H [Bosnia-Herzegovina], and our estimates that 50,000 people have been killed in the war in Croatia, then we arrive at a horrifying number of a quarter of a million dead, which shows the full gravity of this serious aggressive war which Serbia is waging in its insane dream of a Great Serbia.

We are all called upon to investigate and establish the truth about this war, including the gentlemen in the IPD.

[Luburovic] Do you intend to organize some conference or meeting with representatives of the Croatian Army to debate the number of war victims?

[Separovic] Not with representatives of the Croatian Army in particular, but we are preparing an International Meeting on the Topic of Genocide and War Victims as part of the 59th World PEN Congress in Dubrovnik. We are opening debate on all the issues of the crimes and victims of this war, which is still going on. The other director, aside from me, will be the American professor Winston Nagan. We are trying to get Al Gore, U.S. vice president, and several congressmen. Amnesty International is worried even now about whether everyone who wants to speak will have an opportunity at the conference, and whether entry visas will be furnished for everyone. They are thinking about participation of the Serbs. We are replying in the affirmative, we are convinced that a scientific dialogue can be established without prejudice. We have our arguments, and we will state them. This will be an international meeting. We can also organize the debate on losses in this war later. The Croatian Victimology Society has published in its own edition the well-known book of Eng. Vladimir Zorjavic, *Gubici stanovnistva Jugoslavije u drugom svetskom ratu* (*Losses to the Yugoslav Population in World War II*) (Zagreb, 1989). The time is still not right for such a study about this war. Too much is still unknown, many fates. No one wants to talk about losses while a war is still going on.

[Luburovic] How do you assess Croatia's activity at the international level in presenting the victims in this war?

[Separovic] We began very early to point to our victims. When we were seeking recognition, we emphasized the unjust nature of the war against Croatia and the price we were paying. Vukovar and Dubrovnik, Vocin and Skabrnje were part of our presentation abroad. Those victims of ours speeded up and strengthened Croatia's recognition in the democratic world. The Government of Croatia, but also nongovernmental organizations, told the world and especially the United Nations about the crimes in Croatia. The Center for Genocide and War Victims also helped in getting the truth to the United Nations, CSCE, Helsinki Watch, Amnesty International, and the Human Rights Committee. We especially pointed out the victims of Vukovar, the people missing from the Vukovar Hospital, but also the fates of individuals whose family members have turned to us. Nevertheless, the big job of telling the world about Croatia's suffering has still not been completed. In certain matters, Helsinki Watch and the U.S. State Department, which has filed three reports with the Security Council, have surpassed us in their reports.

The findings of Tadeusz Mazowietski are superb. Those reports also mention "our" alleged crimes. Helsinki Watch is insisting on events in Marino Selo, Gospic, Karlovac, on Serbian houses that have been blown up. Their report ("War Crimes in B-H," August 1992) mentions crimes of Croats and Muslims, without giving the names of those who are to be prosecuted, but they do say that "there is sufficient evidence to investigate the following persons for having committed war crimes: Blagoje Adzic, retired general of the JNA, Dragoslav Bokan, Serbian paramilitary officer, Mirko Jovic, Radovan Karadzic, Slobodan Milosevic, General Ratko Mladic, former commander of the JNA in Knin and Banjaluka, at present commander of the Serbian forces in B-H, Gen. Zivota Panic, commander of the JNA and former defense minister of Yugoslavia, Zeljko Raznjatovic, known as 'Arkan,' a Serbian paramilitary leader (also sought by Interpol for crimes committed in West Europe), and Vojislav Seselj, a Serbian paramilitary leader, president of the Serbian Chetnik Movement and Serbian Radical Party."

Before establishment of the International Court, Croatia should submit evidence of crimes of those leaders of Serbian aggression against Croatia and B-H. Evidence should also be presented concerning Major Sljivancanin, the warehouseman Goran Hadzic, and others. That job should be done thoroughly, professionally, and at the level of European and world standards as to the presentation of judicial evidence.

Church's Role in Elections Assessed

93BA0691B Zagreb VJESNIK in Serbo-Croatian 21 Feb 93 p 12

[Article by Darko Pavicic: "Who Did the Church Vote For?"]

[Text] *The people are capable of guiding themselves and making decisions without a guardian, and so their church is not needed as a political guardian either, just as that church does not need to have a new political guardian, so well-known to it, imposed upon it.*

One specific feature of the last elections has already elicited numerous commentaries, although not from those directly concerned by those commentaries. The church, in fact, the church dignitaries, the hierarchy, and the clergy in general of the church in Croatia observed these elections silently, without speaking out in an announcement either before or after the elections. Strange? It is to many people, because in a way they had already become used to having bishops formally speak out in a public announcement on the eve of elections, as happened in 1990 and 1992. "Does this mean that it got carried away then and it has now come to its senses?" asked, for example, a GLAS KONCILA commentator, who claimed that "neither then nor now has the church become involved in party rivalries, nor has it become involved in party politics."

What is going on? Why weren't the bishops publicly "interested in these elections"? Does the church leadership think that the believers no longer need their guidance, as during the time when everyone was called upon to participate in the elections, during the time when the totalitarian system, unjust to both the church and to all free-thinkers, had to be ended? That is because now there is a Croatian state, the direction of state policy is known, strong parties representing Croatian options participate in the elections, and so it is not particularly necessary to send believers to the polls, because that could only be counterproductive and serve as an argument for a rapprochement between the church leadership and the ruling party.

The Calling and Political Affairs

"We, as church dignitaries, should not instruct believers on which party to join and which candidates to vote for," the bishops stated before the 1990 elections, as well as that "each individual must make his own decision on this, and the church's leaders only have the duty of encouraging believers to make their own decision as conscientiously and responsibly as possible." After all, it was said of those elections anyway that they were "elections against"—against the system at that time, the Marxist decades, socialist self-management, and everything that was experienced for the past 40 years. How interested the church was in having that system disappear is also indicated by the bishop's announcement: "Specifically, it matters whether the church will finally gain public legal status or whether a more or less skillfully formulated law on the legal position of religious communities and of that same community, i.e., citizens who are believers, will be kept under surveillance, controlling their development and activity as if they were a potential social danger."

The church thus kept its distance in order to avoid entangling its own calling and mission with political affairs, which through their transient nature could certainly hurt the church and its reputation. The same position was advocated for the August 1992 elections, when the bishops said in a joint announcement that they encouraged Catholic believers "to commence, in equal cooperation with all citizens, to prepare for and hold the announced elections with full seriousness, responsibly and conscientiously." It was also stated that while believers were encouraged to accept and conscientiously perform their duties in society's public affairs, "the bishops and priests and in the service of their religious and sacramental life, Christian teachings, and spiritual advice."

Who Should Be Supported?

During that period from the elections to the elections for the chamber of representatives in the Croatian Republic Assembly, the church in Croatia sought, like everyone else, public confirmation that everything had really gone as it did. Thus, in the beginning numerous priests, bishops, and archbishops appeared in formal political environments, but that has paled with time, and there are fewer and fewer priests in the company of politicians. Even today, however, especially at local levels, one can see priests who attend various "openings," "commencements of operation," and similar events, where they bless telephone switchboards, ships, hotels.... There have also been cases involving weapons, but that was sharply condemned and stopped. During that time, however, precisely because of frequent joint pictures of priests and politicians, one could hear that the church structures were supporting the ruling party, just as the bishops' calling upon everyone to take part in the elections was interpreted as a church vote for the HDZ. The undersigned, however, is more inclined to think that the "voice of the bishops" and the church is more essential to the ruling party than vice versa, just as it is to the other parties. Does that really mean that whoever has the church on his side will win elections? It is hard to answer that, but it was perhaps best seen that party politicians cared a great deal about the church's opinion when the ruling party, as well as the Croatian National Party and the Croatian Social-Liberal Party arranged meetings with the archbishop, Zagreb Cardinal Franjo Kuharic, before last year's elections.

What did the cardinal tell them then, and what did they tell him? One of the participants in those meetings told me how he was surprised by the cardinal's restraint while they presented their party program and by the words that he addressed on that occasion to everyone, that the church was not linked to any one such program. The extent to which Catholic and Christian elements are important in the views of politicians is probably best shown by the aspirations toward democratic Christianity or Christian Democracy as the basic element in defining a party. The Croatian Democratic Community wants to shape itself precisely on the basis of Christian democracy, and along with them, the KNS [expansion not given], HDS [Croatian Democratic Party], HKDS [Croatian Christian Democratic Party], and HKDU [Croatian Christian Democratic Union], as well as the Croatian (sometimes Catholic is also in the name) Party, are also proclaiming themselves to be (democratic) Christians. Why is Christianity such a lure for politicians? Is it the motive of a 77-percent Catholic nation, or it is a question of the principles of Christianity, which are so fundamental in their universality that a certain party will decide to call itself (democratic) Christian?

Political Guardians

What is meant by authority interpreted in Christian terms was probably best expressed by someone who does not belong to any of the above-mentioned (democratic) Christian parties. "Authority interpreted in Christian terms does not mean ruling over individuals and peoples in order to acquire power over others, in order to satisfy one's own interests and have privileges," Cardinal Kuharic would say, "authority interpreted in Christian terms is self-sacrificing service for each person and for the entire people without selfish considerations, either personal or group ones, in order to achieve freedom and justice in all relations among individuals and peoples." At the same time, the church structures do not prefer any of the existing (democratic) Christian parties or any others (which, for instance, is not the case in Slovenia, where Peterle's people have considerable support from the clergy).

We are therefore gradually arriving at an answer to the question posed—who did the church vote for in the last elections? The answer is—no one. As before, after all, even though it will still be considered for a long time that during the collapse of the socialist system the church was most inclined toward the HDZ, which is impossible to prove in practice with documentation. But who knows—perhaps the situation is the opposite, and it will be determined that the HDZ was the lever that the indomitable church in Croatia recognized as the only possible one for overthrowing an etablished system that had made its life bitter for so many decades. A GLAS KONCILA commentator on the church's behavior before the elections would say that it turned out that "the people are capable of guiding themselves, coping, and deciding without a guardian," and so "they do not need the church as a political guardian either," just as "that church really does not need to have a new political guardian, so well-known to it, imposed on it either."

HDZ Official on State, Election Results

93BA0691A Zagreb VJESNIK in Serbo-Croatian 21 Feb 93 p 10

[Interview with Dr. Ivic Pasalic by Goranka Juresko; place and date not given: "We Are Now Also Sharing the Responsibility"]

[Text] *The coalition of some of the opposition parties won a majority of over 50 percent in some of the larger cities, and by overemphasizing only those results, it is trying to create a false picture of an alleged victory by the opposition at the local level.*

With the February elections, an extensive job has been completed. With the election of representatives in the second chamber of parliament and of counselors in the municipal, city, and parish ones, the internal system in Croatia has finally been adapted to the "Christmas" constitution, and the communal system from the former Socialist Republic of Croatia has been abandoned. The best election results, of course, were achieved by the Croatian Democratic Community [HDZ], which these days is usually appointing the new authorities at the local level itself, but in some places is doing so in cooperation with several opposition parties, while in many places the opposition parties are appointing representatives of the authorities. In connection with that, we spoke with Dr. Ivic Pasalic, chairman of the HDZ's executive committee.

[Juresko] How do you interpret the difference in the election results at the state and local levels?

[Pasalic] The elections were held at the level of parishes, i.e., we had 21 election campaigns, but there were no elections at the level of the Croatian Republic as a single electoral district. Analyzing the election results for the Croatian Assembly's chamber of parishes, I emphasize that in 19 out of 21 parishes the HDZ received the most votes. Except for the IDS [Istrian Democratic Alliance], not one party independently defeated the HDZ. Overall, in the elections for the parish representatives, the HDZ received 45 percent of the votes, which is 2 percent more than in the elections in August 1992. Of the 63 representatives, the HDZ received 38, which is 59 percent of all the seats.

In the elections for the parish assemblies, the HDZ has a majority in 16 parishes (76.2 percent). In the assemblies of the city councils, the HDZ has a majority in 40 cities (56.6 percent), and in the municipal councils, according to the data so far, the HDZ has a majority in about 70 percent of the municipalities.

Analyzing the HDZ's election results, and taking the electoral system into account, one can hardly speak of any significant difference in results at individual voting levels. The coalition of some of the opposition parties won a majority of over 50 percent of the seats in some of the larger cities, and by overemphasizing only those results, it is trying to create a false picture of an alleged opposition victory at the local level. The above-mentioned election results clearly indicate the real electoral picture, from which it is evident that the HDZ is convincingly first in election results at all levels.

Coalition—Necessity and Requirement

[Juresko] Should the election results lead to different behavior by the ruling party or the opposition parties?

[Pasalic] As far as the HDZ is concerned, it is apparent that we still enjoy the confidence of almost every other voter, which obligates us to fulfill our campaign promises consistently and in a high-quality manner. The results in some areas indicate to us that in some places, along with objective difficulties, we had insufficiently high-quality candidates, or even poor work by the party and the executive authorities during the past period. I maintain that we could have achieved much more in the process of denationalization and recovered at least that part of the country or the real estate where there was no dispute, and that it is necessary to do much more in preventing all forms of crime, especially economic crime.

[Juresko] How do you assess the cooperation to date among the HDZ, the HSLS [Croatian Social-Liberal Alliance], and the HSS [Croatian Peasants' Party]? What should future cooperation consist of?

[Pasalic] I view the cooperation to date as correct, and it was primarily due to the election results and as the basis for that the position of each of the parties in Croatia's political life. The HDZ's cooperation with those parties will depend on mutual interests. The fact is that at the level of the parish assemblies and the city and municipal councils, where no party has a majority of over 50 percent, cooperation is manifested through a coalition—a necessity and a requirement. That need to form a coalition and assume joint responsibility to the voters will certainly make many people more serious, because there will not be room for idle criticism.

[Juresko] Does Clinton's plan for Bosnia-Herzegovina have any chance to succeed?

[Pasalic] The fact that the main world power has directly taken part in trying to solve that problem fundamentally increase the chances for that plan's success as well. The attempt to have Moscow accept and support that plan is particularly important, and thus it is realistic to expect intensified efforts to solve that problem, which is very important to Croatia. I maintain that there are no essentially new contents in it compared to the ones from Geneva, which arose to a considerable extent as a brilliant success by Croatian diplomacy and by President Franjo Tudjman personally.

Prerequisites for Internal Stability

[Juresko] Would extending UNPROFOR's mandate accelerate the implementation of the Vance plan in Croatia?

[Pasalic] Croatia accepted the Vance plan in order to prevent thousands of new casualties and the destruction of Croatia. That plan clearly specifies everyone's obligations, as well as the deadlines. The Croatian side fulfilled the obligations it had assumed, but UNPROFOR and the world community have not ensured implementation of all the provisions undertaken in the plan, especially disarmament of the Cetnik communities, and the creation of conditions for the safe return of the refugees and the rebuilding of the country.

In order to extend the mandate, clear guarantees are needed from the world community regarding the method and deadlines for implementing all the treaty's provisions. The determination of the world community and UNPROFOR to implement the Vance plan would facilitate extending the mandate and the peaceful solution of our most important problem.

[Juresko] What is the greatest danger to Croatia's internal stability during the coming period?

[Pasalic] During the period that is ahead of us, I do not see any particular dangers to Croatia's internal stability. Quite the contrary—I maintain that almost all the prerequisites have been created for the stability of the social order. One should recall the circumstances on the eve of the elections in August 1992, when many people questioned the people's confidence in the HDZ. The convincing victory by President Tudjman and the HDZ were the best answer and a prerequisite for a stable Croatia and for the strengthening of its reputation in the world.

By passing the Law on the Territorial Structure of the Republic of Croatia and holding the elections for the parish assemblies and the city and municipal councils, Croatia definitely bid farewell to the remnants of the socialist system and returned to Croatian and European traditions. The election results once again confirmed the political will of the Croatian people, who for the most part put their trust in the HDZ. Other significant political parties also assumed their share of the responsibility. There are responsible tasks ahead of Croatia and all of us: reintegration of the areas that are still occupied into the constitutional and legal order of the Republic of Croatia, the return of the refugees, rebuilding the homeland, and solving numerous economic and social problems. In view of our people's political maturity and everything that we have done in the past three years, however, I am certain that during the following period Croatia will be even more stable, more solid, more democratic, richer, and happier.

Government Program To Help Unemployed Described

93BA0702G Zagreb VJESNIK in Serbo-Croatian 28 Feb 93 p 7

[Article by Ljubinka Markovic: "Government's Social Program: State Does Not Even Have Enough for Black Bread?"]

[Text] *With the social "ID," threatened households would receive a package of food, clothing, and shoes, a meal at a soup kitchen, or even paid expenses. Government uncertainty—to introduce coupons for black bread and milk or to raise the minimum wage—has run aground on the question of how low the poverty "line" is.*

For now, the government has silenced speculation about the introduction of "food stamps" by putting twice as much black bread on store shelves. More bread is being served at the same price despite last week's latest price shock, as first aid in protecting the people who are most threatened. At a press conference, government spokesmen said that the social program is still being studied and that it is already being applied?! But also that at least another 30 days are needed before it is actually applied, because the criteria for distributing the aid must first be determined, and that the government will "support including money in the budget"!?

It sounds muddled, but everything is at a standstill. The draft proposal for the social program was written at the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare. Now it has been given to a broad circle of "readers" for study, among others to labor union headquarters, which asked for a program to be drawn up at the January negotiations.

Something is already being applied—a month ago, the possibility of subsidies for housing costs was introduced. But it is also true that the criteria, meaning the "poverty line," in fact remains to be established. And the question of how much money will be needed in the budget depends on this.

First Have You Helped Yourself?

In fact, the social program began with black bread. Or rather with uncertainty about how to eliminate lines for black bread. Taking on the burden of greater quantities of black bread (wheat from commodity reserves and money from the budget), the government has mended a social rupture with weak thread, probably not even expecting shorter lines itself. During the "time out" thus obtained, it must decide whether to introduce subsidies for the purchase of black bread and milk or to raise the minimum wage, which would automatically raise the amounts of various forms of social assistance. But this decision depends on the outcome of wage negotiations with labor unions, which are resuming on Monday after three failed attempts.

The program began with black bread and milk because it is based on the family "poverty line" currently recognized by the state—the so-called social minimum. And this is calculated on the basis of the level of the minimum wage, which is currently 44,225 Croatian dinars for a family of three and 61,000 Croatian dinars for a family of four. The program will help those who are most threatened, with the main principle being that each citizen must first help himself (work, property, family solidarity). Furthermore, he loses the right to social assistance if he turns down a job or retraining program, and the return of money is sought from persons who are obliged to provide for their fellow man, from the heirs of beneficiaries of assistance, and to record in land registries on beneficiaries' real estate.

Besides the series of social measures already in place, interventionary measures are also being introduced, intended for current beneficiaries and those who are determined to be in need. Such persons would receive a so-called social identity card at centers for social work, in order to keep track of assistance and distribute it more fairly. Exiles and refugees would not be able to get identity cards.

With the social "ID," it would be possible to get a package of vital foodstuffs worth 20 German marks [DM] once a month for every member of the household. Around 70,000 packages a month (840,000 annually) of humanitarian aid and donations would be distributed at specially created social welfare centers. In addition to the current 14 soup kitchens, new ones would be opened based on need, in order that the socially threatened can have a meal. There are plans for the distribution of packages of clothing and shoes as well.

Entire Program: DM34 Million!

One-time assistance in paying for heating, water, electricity, fuel, and other expenses has already been introduced, amounting to no more than the level of the social minimum for the household. The assistance can be received several times a year, but cannot exceed six times the amount of the minimum. Centers for social work exercise discretion in deciding how many bills will be paid off to public or communal enterprises, taking into account the family's social situation. In principle, assistance will not be given to those who refuse employment or, for that matter, have arable land, a garden, a private plot.... This year, around 70,000 subsidies for living expenses would be distributed, amounting to around DM30 million.

If the government decides to subsidize the purchase of black bread and milk, households would receive an advance monthly payment for 25 decagrams of black bread and 2.5 deciliters of milk (polyvinyl chloride film) [as published] for each member of the household a day. For four members, this means 30 kg of bread and 30 liters of milk a month. Black bread could be bought only with a social identity card and special coupon. Stores would have to sell black bread exclusively for coupons until 1000, and afterwards to others as well if there is any left. Whoever gets monthly coupons would not be able to get a package of food that month, nor a meal in a soup kitchen, nor could his bills for living expenses be paid off.

Figures in the program are based on the market price of black bread (250 Croatian dinars), a milk price of 594 Croatian dinars, and the estimate that the subsidy would be used by 300,000 people a month. Each day, 75,000 kg of bread and 75,000 liters of milk would be subsidized. This means a daily budget expense of DM94,477, or DM2.8 million a month, and DM34 million for the entire year! Another DM537,120 would be needed to print up the coupons, so that the bread-milk subsidy for 1993 will cost DM34.5 million!

According to figures in the program, an alternative without coupons—raising the minimum wage—is two times cheaper for the budget. If the minimum wage is increased from 70 to 90 percent of the lowest wage, then various social benefits would increase as well. Based on the example of a January increase in the level of the minimum wage from 30,500 to 39,150 Croatian dinars, it is calculated that only DM 18 million would be needed in the budget for various social expenditures.

Family Needs 300,000 Croatian Dinars

It comes as no surprise that this is cheaper for the state, because a threatened household would fall short. If the state were to buy it bread and milk with coupons, a household of four would get a kilogram of bread and a liter of milk for each person daily. If the minimum wage were raised to 39,150 Croatian dinars, the poverty line for that household would shift from 61,000 to 78,300 Croatian dinars. And for the difference thus achieved it could buy a half a kilogram of bread and a half a liter of milk!

In addition, the entire social program costs DM705 million, but for the most part expenditures that already exist are covered by it, either from the budget or from contributions on wages. Additional money must found in the budget for new interventionary measures—the payment of living expenses, subsidies for bread and milk, the printing of identity cards and coupons, operating expenses for social welfare centers and soup kitchens, and new jobs for 450 people. This means a total of DM71 million, or rather DM54.5 million if the minimum wage is increased in place of the bread and milk subsidies.

Herein lies the rub. The program is based on the recognized bottom level of poverty—the social minimum. It is true that something like seven groups of potentially or already threatened people have been identified, but not even the authors of the program dare to estimate how many are hovering in the "twilight zone." That is why it has been left up to units of local self-administration to find and track them. For now, their gauge for poverty is 61,000 Croatian dinars in income for a four-member household. According to various estimates, statistical ones and those from labor unions, such a family needs more than 300,000 Croatian marks a month simply to survive (admittedly, not on bread and milk alone)!

To that extent, the demands by labor unions for a drastic increase in the lowest, and thus the minimum, wage have corrupted the government's calculations in the social program. In the meantime, real life has complicated things, because since Monday milk has gone up to 792 Croatian dinars! If the higher amount is recognized as the "poverty line," then hungry people will come rushing out of the "twilight zone," while the program will run aground on the languishing budget. If it is left too low, then the program will run aground because of dissatisfied citizens, who will see neither a crumb of bread nor a drop of milk from the measures. Indeed, where is this poverty "measure" when even the criteria of bread and milk alone cause a headache? And would this headache be any less if other overdue economic measures were to arrive?

Federal

UN, Bosnian Serb Army Officials Meet in Belgrade

AU2603155093 Belgrade Radio Beograd Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] A meeting between UNPROFOR [UN Protection Force] Commander General Wahlgren and General Morillon, commander of UNPROFOR for the former Bosnia-Herzegovina, on the one hand, and General Ratko Mladic, commander of the army of the Serbian republic [of Bosnia-Herzegovina], and General Milan Gvero, deputy commander of the army of the Serbian republic, on the other hand, began in Belgrade at noon today.

Prior to the talks, the Serbian prime minister welcomed the UNPROFOR representatives and the army of the Serbian republic on behalf of the Serbian government, which is hosting this meeting. He expressed the wish of the government of the Republic of Serbia that the participants in the talk reach an agreement on a ceasefire and end of hostilities that would be acceptable to all three sides in the war in the former Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Sainovic stressed that the republic of Serbia is strongly supporting a peaceful solution to the crisis and that he hoped that the talks would be successful. The talks between the representative of the army of the Serbian republic and UNPROFOR started after that brief joint meeting.

Army Chief Receives UN, Bosnian Serb Commanders

LD2603200593 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1911 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] Belgrade, 26 Mar (TANJUG)—In Belgrade today Colonel-General Zivota Panic, chief of the General Staff of the Yugoslav Army, received General Lars-Eric Wahlgren, UNPROFOR [UN Protection Force] commander in former Yugoslavia; Lieutenant-Colonel-General Philippe Morillon, UN commander in former Bosnia-Herzegovina; and Lieutenant-Colonel-General Ratko Mladic, commander of the Serb republic army, at their request.

The information service of the Yugoslav Army General Staff reported that Generals Wahlgren, Morillon, and Mladic briefed Gen Panic on the current situation in the war-torn areas and outlined the possibilities for ending hostilities and organizing humanitarian aid deliveries.

The Yugoslav Army chief of staff gave his support to efforts for ending the war and expressed readiness to help with the realization of this humane goal, on which the FRY, the Republic of Serbia, and the Serb Republic are all insisting.

Gen Panic also expressed hope that international factors will contribute further toward finding a just solution by peaceful political means, equally observing the interests of all three nations in former Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Jovanovic Comments on New York Talks.

AU2703214793 Belgrade RTB Television Network in Serbo-Croatian 1830 GMT 27 Mar 93

[Interview with Vladislav Jovanovic, foreign minister and deputy prime minister of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, by Dusan Cukic at the Belgrade Television studio—live]

[Text] [Cukic] Mr. Minister, you have just returned from America, so to speak, where you had many meetings. Please tell our viewers about the most important activities.

[Jovanovic] I was there at the invitation and suggestion of cochairman Vance in order to help in the New York round of the talks with the Bosnian Serbs' representatives. In this respect, we tried as much as possible to establish a relationship for greater mutual confidence and make possible a reasonable compromise, that is, agreement. In this respect I had several meetings with the cochairmen, the UN secretary general and a number of his closest associates, as well as with the envoys of the United States and Russia. I also made a one-day visit to Washington in order to meet some congressmen and representatives of the press. These were more or less my activities there. What may come out of these activities may be summarized as this: First, the political solution to the Bosnian crisis is a solution without an alternative, a valid alternative, as virtually no one is seriously taking such an alternative into account; even if some threats are made, including those military ones, behind those threats there is certainly no real political will to realize them. Moreover, what is even more important, the political negotiating process is inevitable, regardless of all condemnations and the statements that the New York round has put an end to the Geneva negotiating process regarding Bosnia and that it can be continued only (?in) some other process. The negotiating process, such as it is, is irreplaceable, and will certainly be continued, perhaps under some other circumstances and with different negotiators, but there is no other way out except for the one leading toward a reasonable compromise.

[Cukic] Therefore, this was what was happening in New York and the ultimatums that are following now—if the Serbian side in Bosnia fails to sign, this or that will happen—is nevertheless no debacle, as many people write and many comment tendentiously. This is no debacle for the Geneva peace negotiations.

[Jovanovic] I am convinced that it is not, as no one, even absolutely none of the participants in the Bosnian war, as well as the foreign powers involved in the process of solving the crisis, seriously believes that any solution can be found by force. I would say that they do not even believe that a valid and final solution can be reached by imposing a solution. Therefore, these threats and ultimatums that are being heard left and right are the usual setting at the end of such talks. However, you have seen, there is always this conditional if: It is not certain that this will happen. Parallel to this situation, one makes attempts, and establishes bridges toward the other side with a view to ensuring a process of political contact and negotiation. All those people who bear the responsibility of ending the war in Bosnia perfectly understand that. I think that this was what happened yesterday, this great assistance that Yugoslavia, or more specifically Yugoslavia in the person of President Milosevic, proffered, and thereby enabled the cease-fire agreement in Bosnia to be reached. This is of exceptional importance, and it will act very positively both as a shock absorber and stimulator for reviving and continuing political contacts and negotiations.

[Cukic] Minister, just one more question: After all those contacts in America and the United Nations, did you get an impression that Yugoslavia, Serbia, and Montenegro are not going to be made a scapegoat for everything that is happening in this part of the Balkans?

[Jovanovic] We tried to persuade our interlocutors that the political situation in and around Bosnia is moving with rather visible speed, and that all those standing at points near the beginning of the crisis risk divorcing themselves from reality. To be more specific, regarding the condemnation of Yugoslavia as the country which is the most responsible for the situation in Bosnia, for the alleged aggression, and the like, they are realizing and accepting the fact that the international community itself has in the meantime revised this position by creating a certain structure of negotiations in Geneva and New York to which it invited the three sides in the interethnic civil war in Bosnia, and not Yugoslavia. By doing so, it has automatically, implicitly, and formally denied that Yugoslavia is a participant in the war in Bosnia, and moreover that it is not an aggressor.

Apart from this, they are realizing, and I would say are more inclined toward accepting the fact that Yugoslavia can by no means be treated as an enemy of peace and as an opposing side, but more as a partner making recognized contributions toward realizing the results at the Geneva conference reached so far, and, what is also very important, as an inevitable party to any political solution in this situation. Therefore, without Yugoslavia it is not possible to reach and therefore ensure any solution that would establish peace and security on the Balkan peninsula. This is something that is coming through. There is still the question of whether it is doing so with a sufficient speed, and whether due to this sluggishness in the truth coming through there will be further unnecessary victims. This mediation favor that we made yesterday to negotiators helping establish a cease-fire in Bosnia is one of the living proofs that only absolutely useful and positive contributions for peace and security of the regions can come from the direction of Yugoslavia.

[Cukic] Respected viewers, this was the federal minister for foreign affairs and deputy federal prime minister. Thank you, Mr. Jovanovic.

[Jovanovic] Thank you.

Inflation Reaches Record Monthly High

LD2603220793 Belgrade TANJUG in English 2138 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] Belgrade, March 26 (TANJUG)—Average daily inflation in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in March was 4.3 percent, the Federal Statistical Office said on Friday [26 March].

Over the February 21-March 21 period retail prices rose by 225.8 percent compared to the month before, setting a new monthly record.

Retail prices increased twentyfold from the beginning of 1993 to March 21. In March, they were 8,000 percent higher than the monthly average for 1992.

Solvency of Vasiljevic Bank Questioned

LD2603174293 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1714 GMT 26 Mar 93

[By Milica Knezevic]

[Text] Belgrade, March 26 (TANJUG)—In less than three weeks, developments following a recent spectacular flight to Israel by private banker Jezdimir Vasiljevic have shown that his financial empire was a colossus with feet of clay.

The scandal broke out on March 8 when Vasiljevic, on his way through Budapest, accused the authorities in Montenegro and Serbia of "state racketeering."

Since that time, Vasiljevic has made a series of bombastic contradictory statements calling into question even the facts which seemed indisputable at the time of his unexpected flight, including the claims about his great financial might.

On different occasions after leaving Yugoslavia Vasiljevic stated that the sum of foreign currency savings in his bank, Jugoskandic, was 38, 20, and 120 million DM [Deutsch marks]. However, his associates claim that a sum of 312 million DM deposited by citizens was registered on March 11.

A sort of explanation was offered by Jugoskandic's financial adviser Ljubomir Sundic who said that the bank did not keep any records of citizens' deposits. Vasiljevic's closest associates did not have as much as 20 per cent of information about his transactions, said Sundic.

The National Bank of Yugoslavia last year turned down Jugoskandic's request to be registered as a bank in Belgrade. Jugoskandic holds most stocks of the bank of private economy in Podgorica, the capital of the Yugoslav Republic of Montenegro, through which it obtained its status and name.

Vasiljevic claims that two months ago the Montenegrin Government seized 62 million litres of fuel in Podgorica and the port of Bar, thus causing a 67-million-dollar loss to Jugoskandic.

Government spokesmen claim however that only eight million litres of petrol, worth about eight million DM, was involved.

This, claims Vasiljevic, jeopardizes his biggest investment which was to guarantee the depositors that they will be at least partly indemnified.

Similar confusion surrounds all other details of the scandal, including the payment of fees to the actors of a chess spectacle, the match between Robert Fischer and Boris Spasskiy, organized by Vasiljevic in Montenegro's off-shore hotel-island St. Stefan last summer through autumn.

The actual motives of Vasiljevic's flight are still unknown, although the statements by all persons involved have been regularly reported by all Yugoslav newspapers for the past 19 days. The statements by Vasiljevic himself have not helped to make them clear.

Everything is still vague, except the fact that Vasiljevic's financial empire is not such as he sought to portray it. It is also certain that the cost of his self-contentedness will have to be borne by deceived depositors.

Economist Explains Role of Private Banks

93BA0700D Belgrade BORBA in Serbo-Croatian 27-28 Feb 93 p III

[Article by Bojana Jager: "Who Does Not Have, Will Repent"]

[Text] *Private banks, which are essentially state ones, also perform the function of social care for "Dafina's and Jezda's people." Instead of the state's forming a fund for the socially threatened, through interest rates in private banks it helps citizens who are willing to sacrifice something in favor of the state.*

Can a state that was thoroughly involved in creating financial disorder be expected to make a real effort to eliminate it, even though it has declared that to be a goal of its program? How did the new Serbian government recently do it?

It was only to some extent in order to prevent the real danger that accelerated inflation might lead to money's losing its role and threaten the state's vital functions as the main "employer" for the police, the army, and all other strata for whose wages it is responsible. On the other hand, too much financial order would eliminate the state's own current foreign exchange and dinar revenues, and moreover in a situation in which it is no longer capable of finding the right taxpayers to ensure them, nor of reducing its own expenditures. They increase daily with the number of refugees, unemployed workers, humanitarian and other assistance to the Krajinas, the costs of an excessively large state apparatus, and the consequences of the blockade, as Dr. Danijel Cvjeticanin from the Belgrade Economic Institute explained.

Logic of the Illogical

In the circle consisting of the little man, the big state, and several powerful private banks, obviously everyone has his own interest. The private banks, in front of which lines of foreign exchange depositors are accumulating, have a tacit agreement with the state that their liquidity will be supported from the state centers and that what they do have as transfer money can easily be converted to cash, which is extremely necessary for paying interest on those savings, and perhaps even for the street purchase of foreign exchange. Furthermore, one can even make a profit on those transactions, regardless of whether citizens or enterprises are involved. For example, a citizen who has received a solid wage of 1.2 million dinars and wants to convert 800,000 to German marks [DM], if he does not do it within a week, will lose 14 percent with daily inflation of 2 percent. The above-mentioned amount will consequently be reduced to the real amount of 700,000 dinars. Because of that calculation, he will be willing, with the same loss in favor of the bank, to exchange that amount in transfer money for cash, and use it to buy DM58 on the black market at the current exchange rate. Naturally, the black-market exchange rate will very quickly compensate him for this loss and ensure a profit. An authorized private bank can easily convert this money to cash again at the SDK [Public Auditing Service], and now moreover at a 1:1 ratio. This would represent a small "support from the state," for the useful work that it is doing.

Why would the state do this? Simply because banks like Dafiment, Jugoskandik, and similar ones are today the only institutions that are still capable of taking foreign exchange from citizens and retaining it, naturally through the illogically high interest rates that they give for those savings. Obviously no one would be able to force citizens any longer, once they have been cheated, to entrust their foreign exchange to socialized banks, in which many people lost their old foreign exchange savings. In this way, however, the state is nevertheless succeeding in gathering in its vaults the urgently needed foreign exchange that is still in its subjects' mattresses. The above-mentioned banks obtain the dinar cash for paying the interest through alleged transactions or indirectly through their clients. In principle, it does not matter whether the money is sent directly from the press or whether the state will be well-disposed toward some enterprise "of special significance" which it will allow to repay a bank's loan at a price that includes the cost of the interest on foreign exchange savings and even adds something.

Who Has, Gets

These private banks, but actually state ones, as Dr. Cvjeticanin emphasizes, also play another significant role: social care for "Dafina's and Jezda's people." Instead of the state's forming a fund for the socially threatened, someone thought of setting the matter up as follows. If one already has to grant free assistance, why not give it to those who are also willing to sacrifice something in favor of the state? For instance, if someone deposits DM1,000 in savings in these banks, and thus makes a guarantee for himself, isn't it fair that he should receive monthly assistance of about DM100 and that with his pension of DM30 he can survive the twilight period nicely? In that way the state does not have to worry about criteria for offering social assistance, nor about justice; the one who has something and invests it gets something, Dr. Cvjeticanin pointed out.

In view of all this, what can be expected from the authorities which are threatening to introduce order, but which are only suited by it to some extent? According to Dr. Cvjeticanin, if it introduced financial discipline the state would have to refrain from the privilege of issuing money. In that case many of the government's expenditures would quickly prove to be irrational, and it would also become clear which social groups were bearing the high costs of politics. With the goals thus stated, the big question is whether they would consent to that position of theirs, or whether it would cause social unrest that would force the state either to retreat or to organize forcible methods of exercising its authority. In other words, in Dr. Cvjeticanin's opinion, one should not expect too much. Perhaps this whole system will be presented as legal, and a monopolistic position will definitely be ensured for several key private banks that are substitutes for state ones.

Bank Official Explains Dinar Circulation

93BA0700C Belgrade BORBA in Serbo-Croatian 27-28 Feb 93 p III

[Article by Jasna Kesic: "Adventure of a Weak Dinar"]

[Text] *It is not possible for money from the Topcider press to go into the hands, for example, of Dafina Milanovic, but it is possible for organized dealers to open several current accounts into which a large amount of money will be paid to them, which they then withdraw, and buy foreign exchange on the street.*

"Stories like the one that money from the Topcider press goes straight to Dafina Milanovic or even into the hands of street dealers are completely incorrect. I maintain that it is absolutely impossible," stated Vojislav Tomic, the director of the National Bank of Yugoslavia's [NBJ] Treasury, whose jurisdiction also includes the Institute for the Manufacture of Bank Notes. "Every day the Institute turns over the bank notes that it has produced to the NBJ Treasury, and they go from there to the national banks of the republics and provinces at their request. During that trip the money is under a special security system; it is carried in armored cars, and guarded by special armed units of the Federal Ministry of Internal Affairs. Those vehicles may not stop anywhere between the two banks, and the delivery is signed for.

"It is also almost impossible for the money to be released directly from the republic and provincial national banks to the street, because they do not have many reserves in their vaults and they are constantly complaining that they have a shortage of money. If it nevertheless happened, it would be a crime," Tomic explained. "When the money is released into the system—into the SDK [Public Auditing Service], post offices, and banks—then it is already much easier for it to be found illegally on the street. It is usually done in the following way: An individual, or organized dealers, open several current accounts in their own names, and a large amount of cash money is deposited in them. They then withdraw that money, and buy foreign exchange on the black market for their own account or for the accounts of a certain bank, the SDK, or an enterprise. That is how a lot of cash is illegally diverted, so there is no money in the banks when people want to withdraw it."

"It is hard to control such speculations, because everything appears legal, and so it is also hard to prevent it," Tomic said. "If the Serbian government's announcements that it will oppose those machinations are carried out, that will mean a great deal for introducing financial order in the country. It will also be shown that the law-governed state is functioning, and it will be possible to conduct cash payments with much less money. Finally, the big disgrace that has arisen through the fact that the money is on the streets and not in the banks will cease."

The treasury director explained that there is now about 1.1 billion dinars in cash in circulation, and that this is more than enough to satisfy all needs for cash payments under normal conditions. "The decision to print money is made by the NBJ's Council of Governors on the basis of a review of the annual needs. All the amounts are never produced at once, however, and instead three-month operational plans are prepared. A denomination structure is also determined for them, i.e., monthly amounts for each denomination."

Every day the Institute in Topcider turns over the bank notes manufactured to the National Bank's Treasury, and it is important to note that everything is done under the strict supervision of employees of the central bank. Every day, it is necessary to know how many sheets of white paper are needed from the treasury, in order to determine the number of sheets delivered and the number of bank notes produced at the end of the work day. Every day it is also known exactly which workers are working directly on that line and on which shift, as well as the inspectors who confirm and initial the exact number, which alphabet was produced that day, which series, and the number of bank notes.

From Topcider, the bank notes go to the NBJ's treasury, as we have already said, and from there, under special guard, to the national banks of the republic and provinces, that is, to their vaults. Requests from SDK units in the field for cash come there, and then they distribute the cash to all the participants in payment transactions. The SDK, in fact, has transfer and current accounts through which transfers and cash payments are made. The total number of units in Yugoslavia through which payments are made is 1,830, which includes 185 SDK units, 106 banks, and 1,538 post offices. There are many intermediaries in that circulation of money, through which it goes to the final user, the citizen, and it can be seen that the money's path is irrational.

"The new law on the NBJ that is in Assembly proceedings provides for a rational path of money, which would go directly from the central bank to the SDK units, because the republic and provincial national banks will be eliminated or converted to branches," Tomic said.

Commentary Criticizes Western Role in Talks

93BA0735A Belgrade POLITIKA in Serbo-Croatian 8 Mar 93 p 2

[Commentary by Miroslav Lazanski: "Tightening the Spiral of War"]

[Text] Do Serbs regard U.S. President Bill Clinton "as a weakling," as THE NEW YORK TIMES writes, whereby "the U.S. President kneels before the criminal bullies leading Serb aggression in Bosnia," as the prominent New York newspaper asserts, or will the United States accept the testimony of French Gen. Philippe Morillon, the UNPROFOR [UN Protection Force] commander in Bosnia, who says that the Serbs are falsely accused? Or if, in fact, the truth is not important to the White House, then a pretext for new pressure on the FRY will be easy to come up with. And this pressure portends new, even more rigorous sanctions and an absolute blockade on sea approaches, as well as a blockade of navigation on the Danube for ships from our country, or for those who are transporting suspicious cargo through our country.

The small blue booklet containing the UN Charter and the Statute of the International Court of Justice is similar in size to the red booklets from the era of Mao's Cultural Revolution. There is practically no difference between the red and the blue booklet in terms of the rigidity of some chapters and articles. Chapter 7, which discusses actions in the event of a threat to peace, a violation of peace, and acts of aggression, includes Article 41, which provides for a full, or partial, suspension of economic relations and of rail, sea, air, postal, telegraph, radio, and other ties, as well as a suspension of diplomatic relations with a country or side that is determined to be committing a violation of peace, acts of aggression, and a threat to peace. Legally speaking, if the UN Security Council decides to cite Article 41 of Chapter 7, then President Clinton will be able to base new sanctions on the UN Charter. It is superfluous and meaningless to discuss the fairness, humanity, and opportuneness of such a decision and such measures right now. A world is currently being made to order with only one superpower.

The United States is supposedly horrified by events in the former B-H [Bosnia-Herzegovina]. The West is dismayed by what is going on there. To all of them, this is not a "democratic" way of solving problems. As if the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia was carried out by democratic means, with the consent of everyone who lived in that country. The United States and the United Nations rushed to recognize the Bosnian phantom state before it was agreed to by the three nations there. One mistake automatically elicited a series of new mistakes. Now, of course, it is hard for a major power like the United States to admit the mistake that it made, the price of which we are all paying.

For its cooperativeness in seeking peace in the former B-H, the cooperation demonstrated in Geneva and New York, Yugoslavia has not been rewarded by even a symbolic lifting of the sanctions. Instead, it is threatened with new and even harsher measures. Regardless of the amount of influence wielded by Belgrade over the Serb side in the former B-H, if the West decides to impose a solution on this region, it will not be long-lived and will represent a constant source of new conflict. The war is B-H is a "sui generis" conflict, not a struggle between "good guys and bad guys." It is an unconventional war without rules, where everything is permitted. The morals and ethics of this type of conflict recognize only one goal, and that is survival.

If the United States, despite Radovan Karadzic's warning, imposes new sanctions on Yugoslavia and the president of the Serbian Republic [of Bosnia-Herzegovina] does not do what he has indicated in that case (break off all negotiations), then the United States and the West will have only two choices for the former B-H: recognize the de facto situation on the ground, or directly intervene militarily against the Serb nation in B-H, including with ground troops.

The United States learned a very painful lesson from the Vietnam war and collapse: that its superiority in the operative, logistical, and technological dimension of strategy cannot make up for weaknesses in the political dimension of strategy—the weaknesses of the government of Alija Izetbegovic's phantom state and the lack of clear and absolute support by the U.S. public for U.S. involvement in direct military intervention.

It is true that for now Bill Clinton is still rejecting that option, but over the past two years the White House has radically changed positions plenty of times. While the Pentagon was headed by Caspar Weinberger, Frank Carlucci, and Dick Cheney, the prevailing doctrine for the use of U.S. armed forces was "only when and where they have a high probability of decisively altering the military situation, with the exclusive goal being to achieve a military victory."

But now Les Aspin is head of the Pentagon, and the doctrine for the use of U.S. armed forces is gradually changing in the direction of greater possibilities for limited use of the military. The operation to deliver humanitarian aid to eastern Bosnia is still not direct military intervention, but it does have the pungent taste of a demonstration of military strength. It is also yet another measure that serves to tighten the spiral of blackmail, blockades, sanctions, and threats in a chain that is continually tightened from only one side. In theory, this spiral of tensions and aggressive arrogance must break somewhere. Will it then result in the hideous spectacle of Americans, once again, killing and being killed 10,000 km from home?

There can be no end to the war in the former B-H through solutions imposed by any of the belligerents. Strengthening the sanctions and blockade will halt neither the violence nor the war operations. "An engine cannot run without gasoline, but a person can," the Vietnamese used to say. And they won.

Importance of Serbian 'Corridors' Stressed

93BA0702B Belgrade POLITIKA in Serbo-Croatian 28 Feb 93 p 7

[Commentary by Ljubodrag Stojadinovic: "From the Military Corner: Corridors or Enclaves"]

[Text] *Is the idea of a federation of Serbian states only a distant civilizational (and not wartime) projection?*

There is a thin line between war and negotiation. Everything can be broken off and set back to where we started, with the shabby results of Geneva and New York coming to naught.

The three sides participating in the negotiations (the Serbs, the Muslims, and the Croats) understand each other very well, and that is one of the key reasons why they cannot reach an agreement. Looking at the Vance-Owen maps, as well as those by other draftsmen, many people who have never drawn state borders and created graphic states (and they are the majority) doubt that this marvel, which is simultaneously reminiscent of a labyrinth, a trick drawing, a riddle, and a braid, can even work.

Thus, it is clear to everyone that we cannot and will not live together in a unitary state, that a federative state is not possible, a cantonal one is illogical, but that going our separate ways is imponderable. Nevertheless, some model of life (for the survivors) must be found, either through negotiations or without them.

The clash of interests, which in an immediate, real confrontation leads to war (which is not being halted), has given the national (or religious) armies and leaders goals that are just as illogical as Bosnia-Herzegovina is as a state.

The Muslims are far from their religious dream, and they appear to be close to Allah only at moments of disappearance in the name of religion. The help that they seek is based on the suffering inflicted on them, their national suicide for advertising purposes, and their mass Gandhiism (the hunger strike), which only their military-political leadership has avoided. Even if the world understands this type of self-inflicted, fanatical suffering, it could be too late for the innocent people, and Allah and Alija will no longer have anyone to lead.

The Croats have armed half of their vital population. In the administrative part of their mother state, they have nearly 200,000 people under arms, besides another 60,000 in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Their goal is poorly planned strategically, but includes a visible search for new elements to enlarge on the "territorial compensation" syndrome. They are compensating for everything that they have lost, if they cannot return it by force (and they cannot get all of it) with part of the Bosnian Sava basin and Herzegovina.

In essence, the Serbs' military balance sheet comes down to "preservation of the status quo," and thus that which they already have. A simply comparison of land registry records on private ownership by Serbs with the situation in the current phase of the war shows that they have not profited territorially, and that their military supremacy is expressed only in direct skirmishes with their enemies, who have gained legitimacy by encroaching upon Serbian living space.

Insular "observers" see the matter more or less like this: In preserving what is theirs, the Serbs have militarily decimated Alija's armed forces. The Muslims have been left with only the dream of a state that is falling apart because it never actually existed. The Croats are "foreign at home and at home in foreign places." All the conditions are present for a long war, but the negotiations (and with them, the war) will continue until today's fighters, living the best years of their lives, become old men, naturally if they have the opportunity for biological aging. The extremely absurd mix of diplomacy and killing is already showing what the interests are, interests that cannot be realized, by any side, without compromise. Unfortunately, there are not many reasons for compromise, just as there are no conditions for mutual trust. In a phase when the Serbs, despite the operative surprise that they experienced during the January Croatian offensive, still hold the advantage in terms of military initiative, while the Muslim-Croatian military pact is cracking under the weight of the irreconcilable interests of the members of that "coalition," the interests that are declared at the negotiations are only a mild reflection of the inferno on the battlefields.

The key thing for the Serbs right now is to preserve the corridors, which are actually, literally, their wartime and peacetime aorta. The strategy of their military (and diplomatic) enemies is extremely simple: An attempt should be made to use the variant of the drawing-room war to get what could not be gotten military, using the model of "dirty diplomacy" in which the Muslims and Croats are more skilled than the Serbs anyway.

If the physical link between the Serbian Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Republic of Serbian Krajina were to be closed off, and the link with the mother state were to be cut, then Serbs would be lost in the fatal variant of cantonal enclaves. That is one of the nooses being prepared at the negotiations, and this type of diplomatic vise around the throat would only be the beginning of a pandemic of Serb enclaves, which would not even stop at the Drina, nor in Kosovo, nor in Sandzak, and not even in Vojvodina. Thus, the Serb willingness to compromise inevitably stops at questions concerning the corridors, these guaranteed connections with all regions where Serbs live, regardless of whether the idea of a federation of Serbian states is only a distant civilizational (and not wartime) projection.

Agreeing to enclaves in Bosnia-Herzegovina would ultimately lead Serbs back to their atavistic origins, without a home base, without the necessary infusion of personnel and economic potential, without the impulse for an authentic national culture. Pavic's magical story about the Khazars would come to an end in the near future.

Because of all this, it is important to eliminate antinational stereotypes at the national level, which see the dream of a "Greater Serbia" in any effort to defend one's survival, expressing fear of one's own identity instead of worry about ceasing to exist.

Thus, the corridors that connect Serbs with Serbia are not simply a question of military victory, nor of negotiating skills. What we are talking about here is the preservation of vital arteries, without which both the people and the nations are doomed to gradual disappearance.

Ethnic Discrimination in Army Alleged

93BA0735C Belgrade BORBA in Serbo-Croatian 12 Mar 93 p 11

[Article by Borislav Solesa: "Who Can Be a Yugoslav Officer"]

[Text] *In the armed dispute with Serbs in Krajina, can Croats whose motherland is Croatia be loyal to the Serbian or Montenegrin fatherland, i.e., Yugoslavia, in which they live? As fully equal citizens living in this state, can they respect all the rights and obligations that others do, including serving in the military and pursuing a military career? This question can be extended to members of other "non-Serb" and "non-Montenegrin" nationalities living in present-day, rump Yugoslavia as well.*

It is hard to verify this information, but TANJUG reported from Plaski on 7 March that "at the most extended, northwestern point of the Republic of Serbian Krajina, there are volunteer formations from Temerin and Backi Jarak, towns near Novi Sad, in which half of the soldiers are Hungarian." The report describes the attitudes of these Hungarians, who are allegedly angry at the political manipulation from the Democratic Community of Vojvodina Hungarians, which asserts that this is a forced mobilization.

Also unconfirmed reports are arriving from Bela Crkva, alleging that as many as 50 officers have been discharged from the local garrison of the Armed Forces of Yugoslavia [VJ] because they were Croats. The wife of one of these officers who reportedly must leave the military reflects with resignation, "We still do not know whether they will force us from military housing, but we do know that we cannot go to Split to join his family, since they have declared him a traitor there and put a price of 10,000 German marks on his head."

We recently heard about the fate of various officers in Cuprija as well. One high-ranking officer, who wished to remain anonymous, told us that the housing question has not been resolved for more than 80 percent of the officers. These are primarily Serb officers who were serving in Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Macedonia, and were forced, willy-nilly, to abandon their apartments, cars, and all their property. He said that the family of a colleague of his is living in one room and sleeping on "beds" made of foam rubber and cardboard.

In the same city, we also met a pair of officers, one of whom was an ethnic Bulgarian, the other a Macedonian. They consider themselves Yugoslavs without having any comment on the issue. One of the officers left Croatia because he was born in Serbia and is a Serb by birth, while his children were born in Croatia, and do not have Yugoslav citizenship, nor does he himself know how all this will turn out, but he hopes that "everything will come into its own."

Maj. Gen. Ljubomir Domazetovic, who was the military representative to the Federal Assembly of Yugoslavia in the old session during the period when the new Law on the Armed Forces of Yugoslavia was being prepared, the draft of which was completely back in May 1992, and who is now in the post of deputy chief of the General Staff, expresses the prevailing opinion on this issue among the military top brass. He recently said, "Since under the Constitution the Armed Forces of Yugoslavia are made up of Yugoslav citizens, this principle must be respected. Through transformation, the former JNA will be reduced in size by 62 percent, which is also the amount by which the officers corps must be cut. In considering whom to keep in the VJ and what officer structure to provide, the starting point has been the stated needs, the FRY Constitution, and the existing ethnic structures of the population."

This issue was explained similarly during an interview with BORBA by the chief of the General Staff, Lt. Gen. Zivota Panic, and by the rector of the VJ University, Brig. Gen. Momcilo Lazovic. They all emphasize the need to provide fair compensation for people leaving the military in the form of higher wages, pensions, and the solving of all potential problems regarding the purchase of housing.

It is very significant that this planned practice be standardized, and this is also the biggest problem. What kind of military will it be that will have to comply with standards, and what kind of leadership will it have? These are all unanswered questions. Some would create a Serbian Army, others are for a Serbo-Montenegrin Armed Force, and others still would not change the Yugoslav name. Thus, there is still no definitive answer to many questions associated with the new armed force, including the relationship between ethnic and military factors in this region. The old Yugoslav mold is broken, and the new, hastily created one is oppressive and uncomfortable in many places.

Air Force Reportedly Deploying Biochemical Weapons

93BA0716B Ljubljana DNEVNIK in Slovene 5 Mar 93 p 11

[Article by (rz): "The Weaving of an Unknown Weapon"]

[Text] After a break of almost a year, the Serbian air force has once again ejected a so-called spiderweb above Croatia. It happened on 3 January in the area of Osijek, and a day later at Vinkovci and Valpovo. The affair did not arouse any particular attention among the public, but on the other hand it seriously upset the world's professional public. Specifically, when previous and new samples of the spiderweb were compared in world laboratories, they determined that it was greatly improved.

For the time being, to be sure, no one can say yet for certain what the purpose in spreading the spiderweb was, and what it is actually made of. The first samples, however, contained a considerable number of little clumps of undispersed fibers, while the new ones show a much more regular dispersal of thin fibers. There are two types of fibers. The thicker ones have a diameter of 0.4 microns and are made from some form of polyamide. The other thread is even more interesting, since it is only 0.1 micron thick and is composed of seven amino acids. For comparison, let us just state the fact that a human hair averages approximately 15 microns in thickness.

World experts on the defense industry, and also nuclear, chemical, and biological sciences, are not in agreement on what is going on. All of them, however, are warning that one should by no means rule out the possibility that the spiderweb fibers are also intended for biological warfare. Furthermore, without firm evidence, they are hinting that experts from the former Soviet Union are also engaged in developing chemical and biological warfare in the Yugoslav Army's laboratories. They are convinced that it was developed precisely in Soviet laboratories, and then improved in the Serbian ones.

The spiderweb is supposed to be a new item in the Yugoslav Army's equipment, since the pilots who left the former JNA [Yugoslav People's Army] during the Slovene and Croatian wars are not familiar with it. Serbian technology could not develop such things itself, and this consequently involves some sort of international link, in which the Serbian army is only the one that is supposed to have been commissioned to test it in practice, in the opinion of experts.

Why is the spiderweb so interesting that many people are prepared to take the risk and develop and produce it? Above all, it can be a good carrier for various toxic substances, which can be stuck to it. The world has already been experimenting for a long time with biological weapons, but the problem has been how to disperse them. If people try to disperse them with bombs, the heat usually destroys them. That is why the Germans and Japanese, as early as World War II, also tried to disperse poisons in a different way; the Japanese did it by using them to infect turkey feathers. At any rate, the spiderweb is more suitable. From an aircraft, you eject a lump of the substance, which then spreads out beautifully to the ground and covers the enemy territory. All sorts of other things can be stuck to such a spiderweb.

The other possibility is that it is some sort of binary weapon. The Serbs would thus be testing one part of this weapon, which is, however, only effective if it comes into contact with the other part. Less likely is the possibility that this involves unsuccessful tests of so-called aerosol bombs, which cover a wide area through their explosion (an aerosol cloud).

Of course, a final clarification of what the spiderweb is and who it is intended for will be a difficult and sensitive job. We can already say, however, that the investigations will yield a great deal more of interest.

Serbia

Premier Greets Serb, UN Officials Prior to Talks

LD2603161093 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1406 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] Belgrade, 26 Mar (TANJUG)—Prior to today's talks between representatives of the Serb republic [of Bosnia-Herzegovina] and the UN Protection Force [UNPROFOR] in Belgrade, their host, Serbian Prime Minister Nikola Sainovic, greeted them on behalf of the Serbian Government, the Republican Ministry for Information reports.

Sainovic is reported to have conveyed the Serbian Government's desire for a solution to end hostilities, one which is acceptable to all three sides in the conflict in former Bosnia-Herzegovina. He drew special attention to the fact that Serbia is a keen advocate of a peaceful solution to the crisis and expressed the hope that the talks will be fruitful.

UNPROFOR Commander Lars-Eric Wahlgren; General Philippe Morillon, UN Commander in former Bosnia-Herzegovina; General Ratko Mladic, commander of the Serb republic army, and his deputy, General Milan Gvero are taking part in the talks.

Trade Union Body Reports Strike Well Supported

LD2603203293 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1941 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] Belgrade, March 26 (TANJUG)—90 percent of the firms in Serbia supported a strike of warning called for Friday [26 March] by the Serbian Association of Autonomous Trade Unions, while between 60 and 75 percent of the firms, or 80 percent of the workers, went on a one-hour strike in this Yugoslav Republic.

The strike lasted the whole day in the Serbian capital of Belgrade and one hour in the rest of the republic.

In its statement, based on the reports sent in from 19 biggest towns in the republic by 16:00 hours local time, the association said the response to its call was the best in the economy, especially industries, and somewhat lesser in state institutions.

All vital services operated according to the rules in force during strikes, with a minimum of vital functions maintained in towns, the statement said.

The strike of warning was aimed at exerting pressure on the Serbian Government to put into effect the agreement reached on March 12, according to which the minimum wage in Serbia in February would be 1,055,000 dinars (around 50 German marks on foreign currency black market).

The trade unions demanded that the wages be paid in two installments each month (the first being an advance payment) because inflation, which reached 225 percent in March, is devaluing the wages. It also insisted that the prices of essential foodstaffs and services can only be changed once monthly.

Arrest of Trade Minister Analyzed

93BA0702E Belgrade POLITIKA in Serbo-Croatian 3 Mar 93 pp 1, 9

[Article by Radovan Lazarevic: "Why Former Trade Minister Was Arrested"]

[Text] *There is no official information except for the MUP [Ministry of Internal Affairs] announcement; unofficially, it has been learned that the name of the former minister of trade and tourism is linked to the controversial import of six Mercedes cars; what was Vlajkovic's role in trading wheat with Slovenia; what did the Economic Chamber of Serbia point out in the past; why was the arrest carried out by the Security Service of the republican MUP?*

The announcement by the MUP of Serbia the day before yesterday concerning the arrest of Sava Vlajkovic, until recently the minister of trade and tourism in the Serbian government, as well as Andrija Jovicic, the current deputy minister in the same ministry, and Divna Korac, a market inspector from Valjevo, seems to indicate that the struggle against crime will not spare people at the summit of power if there is any basis for this.

The only thing that can be learned from the meager information provided by the MUP is that the three people in question were "detained for interrogation based on the well-founded suspicion of having committed criminal acts that are prosecuted ex officio." In more concrete terms, there is not a word about what acts are meant.

Tracking down this information yesterday, we first knocked on the door of the Ministry of Information in the Serbian government. But the people there did not known anything more about what the MUP announcement said. Nor did we have any better luck at the Ministry of Trade. Minister Velimir Mihajlovic was in a meeting, and his coworkers were not exactly eager to talk to us.

Actually, at the government's house we heard an explanation with which it is impossible to find fault, at least right now. Recalling that the showdown with crime was announced by the president of the republic and the prime minister of Serbia, this setting in motion of proceedings against a recent minister and current deputy minister is interpreted as the government's resolve to bring those who have been untouchable, at least thus far, to justice. Naturally, no one is predicting how all of this will unfold or putting forward a prejudgment before the trial. It was suggested to us that we should wait to see what the investigators say.

What we were unable to learn under the roof of the government building we did find out, at least in part, from circles close to the government who are usually well-informed. By citing these sources, we have the opportunity to comment in somewhat greater detail on the affairs of former Minister Vlajkovic, about which, as the MUP of Serbia announcement says, there is well-founded suspicion criminal acts that are prosecuted ex officio.

As we learned unofficially, the name of former Minister Vlajkovic is linked to the recent controversial import of six Mercedes cars. Five of them, we have learned, have already been taken over by their rightful owners, including some who were in the top leadership in Serbia not that long ago. The sixth one has still not turned up. We hear that those in charge of monitoring "transactions" such as these are very interested in learning the name of this sixth person.

The question of whether there was anything illegal in this whole affair will be determined by the institutions responsible for such a determination. The same thing could be said about the alleged trading of wheat with

Slovenia, with which Vlajkovic is also charged, according to our sources. Mention is also made of certain commercial transactions with individuals or firms from the Serbian Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, in which not everything appears to be on the up and up.

According to our sources, Vlajkovic had his own company, the business dealings of which are also drawing attention. It is in this context, we learned, that the arrest of Divna Korac, the market inspector from Valjevo, must be regarded.

We also learned that Vlajkovic's contacts with the Republican Directorate of Commodity Reserves have been checked out. We have learned that in the past the Economic Chamber of Serbia has pointed out certain oversights. Reportedly, Vlajkovic's word was final when selecting the companies to which goods were given from the reserves, so that this list contained plenty of private companies, based on strange criteria. The Economic Chamber was allegedly excluded from this entire process. Investigators must still determine whether these goods moved along official routes on the way from the Directorate warehouses to consumers, thanks to Vlajkovic.

The fact that there is something serious brewing is indicated by the fact that yesterday, we learned, Sava Vlajkovic's family hired lawyer Sava Andjelkovic. From him we learned that Vlajkovic was arrested by the State Security Service of the MUP of Serbia, which gives the entire case a possible political overtone.

Former Minister Sava Vlajkovic is certainly the focus of public attention right now. Who exactly is this politician who was very influential until yesterday, and about whom it could even be said, according to informed sources, that he was the right-hand man of former republican Prime Minister Radoman Bozovic?

He came to the post of minister from the position of director of the Provincial Fund for Economic Development in the AP [Autonomous Province of] Vojvodina. He was born in 1953 in Nestin, near Backa Palanka. He earned a degree in economics, with his focus on domestic and foreign trade. He also completed a school for business managers. He worked as the commercial director for "Merkur" in Backa Palanka, and then as director of the "Yasa" Enterprise for the Production of Sports Equipment, where—according to his official biography—he achieved exceptional results in turning this company into a modern enterprise with several thousand employees.

The arrest of former Minister Vlajkovic, current Deputy Minister Jovicic, and Valjevo market inspector Divna Korac has unquestionably aroused the curiosity of the public. People are wondering whether it is just the tip of the iceberg, or....

[Box, p 1]

Announcement by MUP of Serbia: Suspected of Abusing Official Position

Based on the information and documentation gathered in the course of prior activities, under yesterday's decision by institutions of internal affairs of the Republic of Serbia, detainment of three days was stipulated for: Sava Vlajkovic, former minister of trade, hotels and catering, and tourism in the government of the Republic of Serbia; Andrija Jovicic, deputy minister at the same ministry; and Divna Korac, a market inspector from Valjevo, based on the well-founded suspicion that they have committed criminal acts of abuse of official position under Article 242 of the Penal Code of the Republic of Serbia, in order to derive material advantages for themselves and for others.

After the preliminary proceedings are complete, the detained persons, upon being criminally charged, will be turned over to the further supervision of judicial institutions, according to the announcement by the Information Service of the MUP of Serbia.

French, Serbian Managers Establish Contacts

93BA0733A Belgrade EKONOMSKA POLITIKA in Serbo-Croatian 1 Mar 93 p 14

[Article by R.O. Dragutinovic: "Running the Blockade"]

[Text] A three-member French delegation of the Club Prive visited the Association of Serbian Managers (20-21 February) and talked to a group of the most distinguished members of this association of professionals, business executives, and employers. The French businessmen talked with their Serbian counterparts about the possibilities of establishing cooperation—after the UN sanctions are removed, of course. The members of the Club Prive came to Belgrade on the invitation of Slobodan Andjic, president of the Association of Serbian Managers, who recently became a full-fledged member of that international association.

Club Prive exists and operates within the framework of the European Economic Community [EEC] as an international organization of businessmen created in order to establish business, technical-and-technological, commercial, and scientific links among the world's businessmen. The headquarters of Club Prive are in Brussels, and it is headed by Michel Jarneau, a French businessman. The club of private businessmen of the European Economic Community operates through national organizations/delegations, of which there are 12 in Europe (they exist in all the member countries of the EC), but it has been officially created throughout the world: in the United States, Japan, and then in the countries of Africa, Asia....

"We were visited by an exceptional delegation of the French Club Prive including Michel Jarneau, president of the entire organization, and then Jean-Rene Tremble and Mrs. Mirjana Milosevic-Carpentier, who comes from Cacak, and who has made the greatest investment of work and energy to establish cooperation between this organization and our country's business people," Slobodan Andjic said. "They came to Belgrade on my invitation, and they were met by Serbian managers who from the beginning of their organized activity have favored an open economy, cooperation without barriers and restrictions, with all those with whom it is possible to carry on business collaboration, but also to realize their own interest, and that means making a profit. Our association, when it comes to building the new economic system in Yugoslavia, decided long ago in favor of the formula of the Three P's—privatization, proprietorship, and profit, and that means that we will fit very nicely and cooperate with the Club Prive, an international organization with similar or identical objectives. We arranged a discussion and exchange of opinions and ideas with some 30 of our most distinguished members, among them Radoslav Mitrovic, minister of industry in the Serbian government, more as a manager and founder of this association than as a high official of the executive branch of the Serbian government."

Mr. Jarneau spoke to the Serbian business people about the friendship between our two peoples, which cannot be erased, about the unfair sanctions (because they are against the flow of capital, ideas, business, and people, against business itself), but also about his personal obligation, as a citizen of France, to respect them. He promised that he would urge the French authorities to allow business people coming from Yugoslavia to obtain entry visas without difficulty and also to intensify cooperation between businessmen of Serbia and Yugoslavia with the French Club Prive. He also spoke about the need to develop tolerance and democracy in our country, but also about the unnecessary and harmful exaggeration of the French media concerning the situation in Serbia.

"The European countries which insisted the most on adoption of the sanctions against Yugoslavia are now the ones violating them the most and not respecting them," Mr. Jarneau said. "The situation in Serbia and Yugoslavia is much different from the way it is represented by our media and individual politicians. Nevertheless, the war and bloodshed have to stop for any change whatsoever in our position. However, in spite of everything, my associates and I will personally work for improvement of Yugoslavia's position both with the French Government and also in the EC Parliament, because lobbying is one of our inherent functions."

"Although this is the first official visit of Club Prive to Yugoslavia, cooperation and contact with the homeland began considerably earlier," says Mirjana Milosevic-Carpentier. "I made the first contacts with people in the country at the beginning of last year. The people from the Serbian Foreign Ministry, Mr. Jovanovic, were very accommodating, as were those from the Serbian Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Stojiljkovic. I visited a number of successful socialized, but also private, firms. I also contacted the opposition, because I think that cooperation with the Club Prive is beneficial to Serbia and Yugoslavia regardless of who is in power. And then when we were supposed to come on the first official visit to Yugoslavia, the UN sanctions and economic blockade came along. This made me hesitate, but I maintained contact with business people in Yugoslavia, but I also continued to try to persuade my French friends that they should maintain contacts and prepare everything for cooperation when the sanctions are lifted. My enthusiasm and the energy invested bore fruit, and now here we are on an official visit to an organization which is a true partner—the Association of Managers. And something else: I believe, not without basis, that cooperation of the French Club Prive with business people in the country will take formal form even before the sanctions are removed."

At the end of the two-day visit to Belgrade, the French delegation invited the Association of Managers to pay them a visit as soon as possible. There will be no problem with entry "papers," because Mr. Jarneau will appeal personally to the president of France. As matters now stand, the Serbian managers will be guests in Paris for two or three weeks.

Republic's Electric Power System Overburdened

93BA0769C Belgrade POLITIKA in Serbo-Croatian 9 Mar 93 p 11

[Article by M.C.: "Consumption of Electricity Is Increasing Steadily: Electric Power Plants Overburdened, Blocks Are Breaking Down"]

[Text] *Yesterday two blocks of 900 megawatts of power "fell out," and the system was again "strained," so that the introduction of damage exclusions was considered. The block of 620 megawatts in TENT ["Nikola Tesla" Thermal Electric Power Plant] B is again operating. Economy measures and again economy measures.*

Yesterday at 0825 Block B1 in the "Nikola Tesla" TE [Thermal Electric Power Plant] in Obrenovac, with a power of 620 megawatts, ceased to produce electricity. Along with it, a block of 300 megawatts in Kostolac also "fell out." With this the electric power system of Serbia again went to the edge, to "working under a strain," as Aca Markovic, chief director of the EPS [Electric Power Distribution Enterprise of Serbia], says. All capable thermal blocks are in operation, because of high consumption, all storage facilities are empty, and the use of auxiliary hydroelectric power plants is weak, along with small flows. They cannot satisfy even one-half of the consumption of Belgrade.

According to a report from the EPS, "the electric power situation is exceptionally critical," and damage exclusions are even being announced. Citizens are being called upon to economize, although it is clear even to the electric power industry that many citizens are turning on thermal stoves and other heating appliances since dwellings with small radiators are not warm enough. Consumption is hovering around 110-111 million kilowatt-hours, although the greatest part of industry has not worked, they are emphasizing in the EPS. We asked Aca Markovic whether there will be exclusions:

"Block B1 in Obrenovac is again operating, so the situation is better than in the morning hours. Nevertheless, the system is under a strain, economizing is necessary and I again say economizing. There will be no exclusions for now," Markovic told us.

Employees in Karic Bank Resign Collectively

93BA0769D Belgrade POLITIKA in Serbo-Croatian 9 Mar 93 p 11

[Article by M. Pesic: "Collective Resignation of Employees in Karic Bank in Vranje"]

[Text] *"Depositors threatened us," says former director Zoran Velickovic. The bank continued work with clerks from Belgrade, Nis, and Leskovac.*

Vranje, 8 March—The third change at the helm of the Karic Bank in Vranje has taken place, since all employees gave the bank a collective resignation!

Slavisa Trickovic from Belgrade, from whom we attempted in a telephone conversation to learn something more about the latest developments, is now at the head of the bank. It is not possible to enter the premises of the Karic Bank, since long lines form every day in front of it, on Sima Pogacarevic Street, and an indescribable uproar prevails. Trickovic expressed a wish that nothing be written about this, saying that it is a question of a private bank.

Since the Karic Bank in Vranje has 15,000-20,000 depositors and a great number of people are interested in the events in it, we spoke with the former director, Zoran Velickovic. He was also not eager to talk, but he said nevertheless that all 12 clerks of the Karic Bank in Vranje, of whom six were permanent employees, tendered their resignations.

"It was not possible to hang on any longer, because many depositors waited every day in front of the bank, even when we did not have the funds to pay them interest," says Velickovic. "Actually, we were paralyzed and could not work without cash. The depositors rushed at us, demanded interest, and many even threatened us. They even called me on the phone and threatened both me and my family. Because of this we gave notice although none of us had an assured new job."

It is interesting that with the establishment of the Karic Bank two years ago, the first director was Zikica Trajkovic. He was dismissed and replaced by Zoran Velickovic, who has now been replaced by Slavisa Trickovic.

Trickovic says that the Karic Bank is operating normally, but to the question whether daily lines in front of the bank can be considered normal, we were not able to get an answer. They are making lists here in order to determine on what day depositors can get their interest. The Karic Bank does not have a current account in the service for payments exchange and financial oversight (the former SDK [Public Auditing Service]), and money is taken from here to Belgrade or Nis. The current management of the Karic Bank in Vranje has not even opened a line of credit, nor has it deposited regulations.

The employees in Vranje who resigned have been replaced by clerks from Belgrade, Nis, and Leskovac, but the commotion in front of the bank has continued. It has happened that because some have fainted while waiting in line, first aid has had to be administered. Windows on the bank building have often been broken, and there have been other incidents and problems.

Conflict Between Police, Black-Marketeers Viewed

93BA0769E Belgrade POLITIKA in Serbo-Croatian 9 Mar 93 p 11

[Article by G. Bolf: "War Between Police and Black-Market Dealers: Profit More Important Than Fear"]

[Text] *Black-marketeers are fleeing the police, who are pursuing them intensively, but despite great losses due to confiscated goods, they are reporting victory in the end.*

A center for the resale of foreign exchange on Francuska Street, the "Stari Dunav" [Old Danube] cafe, carried out only its legal function yesterday for a short time—selling drinks. Because of frequent raids and the confiscation of foreign exchange, Albanian money traders ceased "operating," but the wish for easy profits overcame fear and—the "dealing" continued.

In the course of the past three days, the militia also organized real hunts of black-market dealers on Bulevar Revolucije, on Zeleni Venac, and at all produce markets. All suspicious goods were confiscated from black-marketeers of all types, but they again demonstrated their toughness. As soon as the militia moved a short distance away, the trading continued. Nevertheless, the supply of foreign cigarettes on the streets was greatly reduced; this is a consequence of the determination of the police to sweep the black-marketeers from the streets.

The war against the black-market dealers announced by the new government is in full swing, but experienced resellers, despite wailing due to the lost battle, are predicting final victory. As they claim, only a regular supply of scarce goods, at prices lower than theirs, can drive them from the streets and markets. That is impossible for now.

The SUP [Secretariat of Internal Affairs] in Belgrade is claiming that the pursuit of black-marketeers has been insignificantly strengthened. Belgrade politicians are silent regarding exact figures about how many goods and how much money have been seized.

The raids on Zeleni Venac of themselves have remained a failure. It has been difficult to be able to find a reseller with high-quality cigarettes. The Rumanian cigarettes

"Top," "Snagov," and "Dacija," less expensive than our least expensive, are a new black-marketeer's hit. With some haggling a pack of these cigarettes, which look as if they have spent at least a couple of days at the bottom of the sea, can be had for 6,000 dinars. Nevertheless, judging from the mood of the black-marketeers, sales are not exactly the best. The most expensive cigarettes continue to be "Marlboro"—40,000 dinars for a pack.

A German brand could be bought yesterday on Zeleni Venac for 19,000 dinars, and the resellers had paid 17,000 dinars for it. Although there have not been enough dinars on the street, according to the claim of the resellers, a slight jump in the exchange rate is the consequence of frequent raids, because of which the supply of foreign exchange is also reduced.

An abrupt jump in the mark to as high as 20,000 dinars, which occurred on Friday, was the consequence of a situation involving a greater quantity of domestic currency, which one of the strong private banks released onto the street.

Russian Journalists' Impressions of Serbia

93BA0700B Belgrade POLITIKA in Serbo-Croatian 19 Feb 93 p 11

[Article by R. Rankovic: "We Will Inform Our Readers in Russia of What We Saw and Experienced"]

[Text] *Gennadij Seleznov (PRAVDA): "We do not completely understand and do not agree with Kozyrev's policy"; when people kill each other it is not so important who is right, but rather that people are dying.*

The chief and managing editors (or their deputies) from the leading newspapers, who came to Belgrade at the invitation of the Karic Brothers company, visited the POLITIKA NIP [News and Publishing Enterprise] yesterday. In a lengthy conversation with representatives of the POLITIKA firm, the guests from Russia inquired about the situation in Yugoslavia, POLITIKA's operation, and the problems that our society is encountering during the period of the old system's collapse. In doing so, they emphasized that they were also encountering similar misunderstandings in their own country.

After the talk, the guests from Russia answered a question about what impressions they had received from visiting Yugoslavia for several days.

Vitalij Morozov (KRASNAYA ZVEZDA), as he stated, came to Yugoslavia to feel and see what so far he had read about or seen on television.

"I felt what the Serbian people are like. I was surprised by how familiar Serbs are with their own history, how deeply tied to Russia they are, and how they expect a great deal from it."

Emphasizing that all the issues should be resolved at the political level, Morozov felt that the spiritual appeal from the Balkans was not sufficiently felt in Russia. "It is my debt as a reporter to convey to readers in Russia what I have seen and experienced in Yugoslavia."

Gennadij Seleznov (PRAVDA) said that he had come to Yugoslavia without any prejudices. "I only knew that it was very difficult here.

"When the UN and the Security Council, including Russia, voted for the sanctions against Yugoslavia, I knew that a good thing had not been done. We do not completely understand and do not agree with Kozyrev's policy, and we are demanding that it be changed.

"I greet the Serbian people, and I am telling them that what Kozyrev thinks is not what the Russian people think," Seleznov emphasized.

In the opinion of Leonid Mlechin (NOVOE VREMYA), Yugoslavia, like all other East European countries, is a victim of the collapse of communism. In the former Yugoslav republics, Mlecin said, people with old ideas have come to power. Instead of new ideas, they have promoted nationalist ones.

"They are sacrificing people to their ideas. I am bitter because of the spread of nationalist motives on the territory of all the former Yugoslav republics. I am particularly bitter because the idea of an international conspiracy has gained so much support. We should primarily seek the sources of misfortunes in ourselves," Mlechin thought.

Anatolij Druz'enko (IZVESTIJA) had the most serious impressions from Vukovar. "There are also crisis areas in our country, and bloody events upset us a great deal," Druz'enko said.

Giving a political assessment of the events, he thought that one could find something in common in everything that had happened in the socialist countries. Furthermore, as he said, in the divisions that had been carried out in the Soviet Union, there were countries that had gained sovereignty in better circumstances, and ones that achieved it with great difficulty (for example, Nagorno-Karabakh).

Emphasizing in conclusion that he thought very highly of the Serbian people, he said, "I never think badly of any people, especially of a people with whom we have fraternal ties."

Aleksej Vishnevitskij (MOSKOVSKAYA PRAVDA) had good impressions of Yugoslavia, although "the situation is very complicated."

"It is very bad when people are killing each other. It is not so important who is right, and who is not—the most important thing is that people are dying," Vishnevitskij thought.

"The situation is very complicated both in our country and in Yugoslavia. It is hard to see people who are dying for their country," said Yurij Sovtsov (TRUD). "Similar processes are taking place in both Russia and Yugoslavia. In short, a great deal of caution is needed now."

According to him, what was called perestroika led to political, economic, and international collapse. Some things in Russia's foreign policy went too quickly, however, and now a change in course can be perceived, he said.

"I do not doubt that Russia will adopt a clearer position on these problems, and that it will realize what the sanctions against Yugoslavia also mean for Russia's economy. It is dangerous, however, to blame just one side or the other. It is necessary to be very cautious about that," Sovtsov added.

Vladimir Baturvo (Russian TV) experienced his worst, but also bright moments in a refugee camp:

"Those people who had lost everything (homes and families) did not fill their souls with hatred. That tragedy cannot be seen in their eyes. They look to the future with bright eyes."

Baturvo thinks that a great responsibility now lies with the politicians—"They have to find a way to have these events and the war end as soon as possible."

As he also said, during his visit in Yugoslavia, he was not able to see ("nor did I ever believe") that the Serbs were bloodthirsty, as they are constantly portrayed in the world.

Micunovic on Friendship With Russia

93BA0700A Belgrade BORBA in Serbo-Croatian 27-28 Feb 93 p 5

[Article by S.P. Stomatovic: "Russia Is Our Friend"]

[Text] Belgrade—"Russia is now articulating its position on the Yugoslav crisis much more precisely. Its great interest is its interest in peace in the Balkans, and in preventing any sort of attempt to threaten world peace," stated Dragoljub Micunovic, president of the Democratic Party, at yesterday's news conference, presenting his impressions from his recent trip to Russia. Micunovic emphasized that he had received assurances that Russia would continue successfully opposing any military intervention in the Yugoslav crisis and would insist on banning arms imports for Bosnia-Herzegovina.

From his talks with Evgenij Arbaaumov, member of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet and chairman of the Foreign Policy Committee, Micunovic emphasized the assurances that Russia's contribution with respect to the Yugoslav crisis in the Russian parliament would be greater than in the past, and "if all three sides in Bosnia-Herzegovina give their consent for peace, then the issue of lifting the sanctions against Yugoslavia and Yugoslavia's future presence in international organizations will also be raised in the Russian parliament."

Russia is determined to cooperate with the world community and the United States in its desire to allow an unbiased approach in resolving the Yugoslav crisis, feeling that it can help Yugoslavia much effectively if it is within the UN instead of outside it, as Micunovic presented the highlights from the talks that he conducted at the Russian Foreign Ministry with Deputy Minister Sergej Lavrov. In the meetings that he had in Russia, Micunovic also raised the issue of Russia's humanitarian assistance to Serbia and Montenegro.

The president of the Democratic Party also spoke about our media's incorrect reporting on events in Russia, saying that the Russian political scene was not faithfully reflected in our news. He mentioned as an example the recent protest meeting in Russia against Yeltsin's policy, which was exaggerated by our television, and he mentioned that the assessment that "the government there will fall" was not good. In response to a comment from a Belgrade TV reporter that the assessment was precisely that, Micunovic said that it was not the media's task to eliminate individual politicians so lightly, and that "there is not a single fact about an imminent coup d'etat."

Micunovic added that the media in Serbia were declaring some minor forces in Russia to be significant ones. "Along with Greece we have one friend, Russia, and consequently, in our mutual relations, both our media and our politicians should behave objectively and be attentive and correct." He mentioned in that context PRAVDA's interview of Slobodan Milosevic, which caused disagreements in the two countries' relations. "With respect to Russia we cannot just rely on certain minor folklore groups and declare them to be significant," Micunovic said.

Montenegro

Bulatovic: Sanctions Not Reason for Secession

LD2803224593 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 2107 GMT 28 Mar 93

[Text] Podgorica, 28 Mar (TANJUG)—Montenegrin President Momir Bulatovic this evening reiterated his previous stand that his recent visits to France, Great Britain, and Italy were no acts of treason or the republic's secession but reflected the need to use all available channels to promote the republic's own realistic interests.

In the "Occasion for Conversation" program of Montenegro radio and television this evening, Bulatovic described his visits to the three West European countries as reflecting a desire by the international community to maintain the continuity of its dialogue with the FRY, since, as he put it, there are difficulties in inviting FRY President Dobrica Cosic and there exists some kind of hysteria regarding the president of Serbia.

Bulatovic drew attention to an earlier statement, in which he said that reasons which could prompt Montenegro to reexamine its status in the FRY were not the sanctions or threats by the international community, but rather violations of the constitutional principles providing for its equality within the federation.

Bulatovic expressed the hope that the FRY President Cosic will remain in his post after a vote of confidence in the Federal Assembly.

Kosovo

Rugova Demands Province Be Put on UNSC Agenda

AU2903101193 Tirana ATA in English 0821 GMT 29 Mar 93

[Text] Tirana, March 29 (ATA)—At the regular press conference held in Pristina, Dr. Rugova, president of the republic of Kosovo, said among the other things that repression still goes on in Kosovo in all the areas. He underlined the new methods of repression the Serb regime exerts on the political activists of the Democratic League of Kosovo and other political parties. This week Serb military and police troops were seriously engaged in activities. We demand from the UN to put the Kosovo issue on the agenda of the Security Council [UNSC] meeting. Also we demand from the governments of the European countries and the U.S. Administration to open information centers or some consular representation in the capital of the Kosovo republic. I substantiate this with the need of free circulation of information and people. Dr.Rugova said that recently the so-called Yugoslavia applied visas and this was intentionally done. It was done in order to let as few as possible observers and representatives of the government and nongovernment international organizations wishing to inspect the situation and get to know the bitter Kosovo reality.

In regard to the recent event in Russia, Dr. Rugova expressed his support for Russian President Yeltsin. He said that Mr. Yeltsin [words indistinct] the democratization of Russia, in the fight against the national-communist conservative forces which still appear in this country. The Kosovo president hailed the recent letter the U.S. President Clinton addressed to President Berisha, promising that he will commit himself in preventing armed conflicts in Kosovo and broader.

Province's Albanian Political Scene Discussed

93BA0735B Belgrade VREME in Serbo-Croatian 8 Mar 93 p 32

[Article by V. Orosi: "Kosovo Mosaic: Weapons, Leaflets, Resignations: Pseudo-Democrats and Pseudo-Pluralists"]

[Text] Lately in Kosovo, it appears that both the Albanians and the Serbs are stepping up their search for a way out of the vicious circle that has been in place for many years. And each group is doing so in its own way. According to a report by the information center of the Democratic Alliance of Kosovo [DSK], for months now bodies of the SUP [Secretariat of Internal Affairs], in conducting a campaign to "collect weapons from Albanians, have been besieging entire towns, raiding houses, and mistreating and arresting people." According to the data available to the DSK, campaigns such as these have been carried out in more than 130 Kosovo towns thus far, while over the past 15 days a similar fate has befallen the rural villages of Nepolje (near Pec), Jablanica (Djakovic Opstina), and Boksic, near Klina. Over the last two months alone, the Pristina Committee for the Protection of Human Rights has documented around 1,000 citizens whose houses have been searched and inhabitants mistreated. "There are a large number of cases where it has been 'suggested' to the victims of this savage campaign that their only salvation is to buy or find the sought weapon somewhere, or to leave Kosovo and their homes forever," according to the report by the committee, which is chaired by Adem Demaci.

The Social Democratic Party of Kosovo has also spoken up about these events, emphasizing that "besides ethnic cleansing, the current state terrorism has other political goals as well, and one should not rule out the intention to provoke Albanians in order that they decide to stage a national uprising." It is interesting that the SUP in Kosovo has not once commented on these events, about which the Albanian-language press has also written extensively, even though it is directly acquainted with all of these people, and even though the CSCE mission, which is stationed in Pristina, has been on the scene for more than three months now.

Serbia's republican institutions have clearly not found a way to truly implement the program of "settling those who would live and work there," or rather of keeping them in the region. Because of the housing shortage and poor living conditions, 242 people moved out of the Pristina region last year alone. Refugees also have very poor accommodations, and not only in Pristina, according to Pristina's JEDINSTVO, in part because of the refusal of the High Commissioner for Refugees to send a certain number to Kosovo, with the explanation that this would "help alter the ethnic structure of the population. Nevertheless, last weekend people in Kosovo were at least momentarily confused by leaflets found scattered around certain local towns and cities, the contents of which were directed against the current policy of the Albanian leadership. This leaflet was signed by the hitherto unknown "People's Movement of the Republic of Kosovo," which advises the president, government, and assembly of Kosovo that it is fighting against those who would accept autonomy, that it turns its back on "pseudo-democrats and pseudo-pluralists, who until recently served the policy of the FRY," and that it does not agree to "Serbian and Macedonian slavery," meaning the creation of a state for Albanians in Macedonia, but rather that it respects "the Kacanik Constitution, referendum, and elections."

While local Serbs interpret this leaflet as discord between Albanian political groups, it turns out, nevertheless, that the people behind this leaflet are a number of previous political emigres to Switzerland, who until the disintegration of Yugoslavia were part of the "Movement for the Republic of Albanians."

Fehmi Agani, the vice chairman of the most influential party of Kosovo Albanians, emphasized in an interview with our reporter that "the criticism presented in the leaflet is unfounded, because not one political party of Albanians accepts autonomy." Especially insinuating is the allegation about some sort of sellout of Kosovo on the market, Agani concludes. Nevertheless, the "storminess" of the Albanian political scene is indicated by the fact that two days ago Iljber Hisa resigned from the post of secretary of the Parliamentary Party of Kosovo (which until recently was chaired by Veton Suroi): "I no longer wish to be either the secretary or a member of this party, because it has abandoned the program orientation and liberal concept on which this party was founded," Hisa said.

Formation of New Assembly Discussed

93BA0735D Novi Sad DNEVNIK in Serbo-Croatian 11 Mar 93 p 6

[Article by Nenad Novakovic: "New Proposal on Forming Kosmet Assembly: Confusion of Law and Interests"]

[Text] *While the Albanians are not for new elections because they think that there is already a parliament (the "Kacanik" one, which has fled abroad), the view in the SPS [Socialist Party of Serbia] is that the legal and constitutionally prescribed procedure should be followed, and the SRS [Serbian Radical Party] thinks that neither elections nor a "Kosovo parliament" are necessary.*

The issue of forming a Kosmet Assembly is being raised once again. Representatives of Albanian political parties think that this assembly has never even stopped functioning, because Albanians are still "authentic members of the abolished Kosmet Assembly." A somewhat ridiculous situation is emerging, because in practical terms the heads of Albanian political parties in the province do not know which parliament is authentic, since neither of "them" is functioning: the one that fled abroad in its entirety back in 1990 after the illegal, monoethnic, so-called Kacanik Assembly, or the unconstituted one whose delegates were "elected" in the exclusively Albanian elections in May. And this very fact indicates that the self-styled politically influential factors among the Albanians do not know how to function and what to do; all of the membership's work is in spite of and with the Serbian state, while they themselves exist somewhere in the air, like something desired yet distant.

Based on a proposal by the Serbian government, the Assembly has passed a resolution on constituting an Assembly of the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija after conducting direct and secret elections according to the provisions of the Constitution and a provisional statutory resolution, which is to be adopted by the People's Assembly of Serbia. In practical terms, this means that on the day when the new Kosmet assembly is constituted, the laws on the termination of the work of the Assembly, the Executive Council, and the Presidency of the Assembly would cease to be in effect. Indeed, the resolution on terminating the work of the provincial Presidency is also rendered null and void, because that body does not even exist under the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia. Until a Kosmet parliament is constituted, which would have to pass and enact a statute, all rights and duties will be carried out by the Assembly and the Executive Council of the Assembly.

The next step is to schedule elections. How can this be done, when Serbia has scheduled elections twice since 1990, and neither time the Albanians have participated? They have boycotted the constituting of and election of members to the Kosmet, republican, and federal parliaments.

Zivorad Igic, the chairman of the SPS Provincial Committee, says that the legal and constitutionally prescribed procedure should be followed, and only then will it be possible to hold elections and constitute a Kosmet parliament.

Dr. Fehmi Agani, the vice chairman of the Democratic Alliance of Kosovo [DSK], says that the very act of abolishing the former Assembly and Executive Council of Kosovo was unconstitutional. In effect, these two Kosmet bodies have not even ceased functioning; rather, they have continued their activities in exile, and the DSK considers them the only legitimate bodies. Agani says that the results of their work are also accepted until a newly elected parliament of Albanians is formally constituted. For him, new elections are unacceptable, since the Albanians held their own elections on 24 May of last year, and the decision to abolish the provincial Assembly and Executive Council is regarded as an extraordinary act of pseudo-legitimation of Serbian rule in Kosovo, which will certainly be unsuccessful.

Dr. Milorad Jevric, the chairman of the SRS Provincial Committee, says that the new initiative to constitute a Kosmet parliament is unnecessary, because for that party such elections are not needed in the province. Indeed, if the Albanians once again do not participate, and it is certain that they will not, then what good is all this to Serbia?! In any event, if this does happen, then the SRS position is still that in order to simply "meet" the Albanians' demand it is necessary to constitute an assembly and hold only one session at which the provincial assembly would abolish itself. That would be the most logical and most normal action, he believes.

It is logical that this legal confusion and the different stances on the (non)existence of a Kosmet assembly and its resurrection must be resolved in the most painless way possible, but how?

It is certain that the strongest Albanian parties in the province at present would not participate in elections scheduled by the Serbian Assembly for a Kosmet parliament (we got such assurances from the majority of their leaders today), and in that case the elections to constitute an assembly would themselves be a "wasted investment." It is certainly necessary to clear up, at least in the world's eyes, the enigma of whether the illegal Albanian parallel or, to express it better, dual parliament (the one in exile and the unconstituted one in Kosmet) exists, who has de facto authority and power in the province, and who is observing legal and valid standards. If at least that could be achieved, the result would be satisfying.